

“A HISTORY OF CHRISTCHURCH  
HOME GARDENING FROM  
COLONISATION TO THE QUEEN’S  
VISIT: GARDENING CULTURE IN A  
PARTICULAR SOCIETY AND  
ENVIRONMENT”

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the Degree

of

Doctor of Philosophy

IN THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

BY

MATT MORRIS

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## Abstract

Garden histories since the mid 1990s have increasingly turned to studies of vernacular gardens as sites of identity formation. More recently, the development of environmental history and specifically urban environmental history has started to show how vernacular gardening in suburban and urban spaces has contributed to changes in urban environments. Relatively little work on home gardening history in this sense has been undertaken in the New Zealand context, while in Australia such work is well underway.

This study augments knowledge of home gardening history in New Zealand by focussing on one urban area, Christchurch, known both as the ‘Garden City’ and as ‘one of the most English cities outside of England’. An examination of gardening literature over the period from European colonisation in 1850 to the first visit to the city by a reigning monarch in 1954 highlights changes in gardening tropes rather than particular garden fashions or elements. The four principal tropes of abundance, beauty, protection and sustenance, each supported with a particular kind of ritual-like garden competition, show how gardening discourses related to ideas about the maintenance of the social and cultural order.

A more objective measure of attitudes to gardens is gained by examining 1823 property advertisements across the period. Categorised by suburb this analysis shows a level of gardening variation across the city. Following this analysis, case studies of four suburbs in three areas were undertaken. These were based primarily on oral histories and reveal the extent of gardening variation across the city, and the limited but significant effect that gardening discourses had on gardens. This suggests methodological problems with many studies of vernacular gardens, as well as opportunities for further studies. This thesis also demonstrates the value of home gardening histories to urban environmental history, particularly with regard to the former colonies of the British Empire.

## Acknowledgments

Working on this thesis has been a nerve-wracking, exciting, sometimes bizarre but ultimately rewarding process made possible only with the input of a great many individuals. First of these must be my primary supervisor, Professor John Cookson for suggesting the topic, pointing to relevant and highly useful sources, and providing encouragement and well timed, prudent advice. Second must be my secondary supervisor, Associate Professor Philippa Mein Smith, especially for introducing me to new approaches and giving critical feedback. Philippa also found funds to support me through my final twelve months, which I appreciate greatly. It made an enormous difference when it was most needed.

In a similar vein I'd like to thank Graeme Dunstall for involving me in tutoring for stage one and two New Zealand history papers. These helped my thinking as well as my pocket and it was much appreciated. Professor Miles Fairburn helped sharpen my thinking and gave useful advice on using statistics; Associate Professor Geoff Rice read early drafts and gave helpful feedback; Dr Te Maire Tau provided very useful information on Ngai Tuahuriri history. Outside of the School of History, I'd like to thank Professor Eric Pawson of Geography for giving his time to meet with me and provide very thorough-going feedback on my work.

I was also very fortunate to commence my studies in the company of fellow Ph.D. students Angela Wanhalla, Robert Peden, Robert Nicole and Charlie Campbell, as well as a host of Masters students who made it all bearable. Apart from their friendship, which was critical, Angela Wanhalla, Michael Allen and that Australian interloper Greg Warburton contributed in substantial ways to the thesis itself. Angela's advice and willingness to help, even with research, was unbelievable, and who else but Mike and Greg would be eager to talk about Clifford Geertz and Robert Darnton while downing a Monteiths or three at Bentley's of a Friday evening? Ms Brown, Ms Dowling, Ms Fox, Ms Gibbs, Mr Searle, Mr Sedgwick *et al*: cheers. I'd also like to thank the couple of hundred students I had along the way who unwittingly helped clarify my thinking.

Outside of the University of Canterbury I would like to offer my thanks to Professor Michel Conan of Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C., for offering me free attendance to the 2003 Dumbarton Oaks Symposium on Gardens and Landscapes, feeding me for two weeks, opening the facilities of his library to me, and giving his time to talk over issues with me and



offer very valuable advice. Professor Joachim Wolschke-Buhlman gave me some useful tips during a stroll around the Dumbarton Oaks grounds, and Dr Catherine Benoit's encouragement was most appreciated. I would also like to thank Dr Katie Holmes of La Trobe University, Melbourne, for meeting with me, listening to my ramblings and giving very helpful references and advice. Thanks also to Helen Leach, University of Otago, for her early and enthusiastic input into the project. Dr Annie Stuart, also of Otago, pointed me to the Dove Meyer Robinson archive at Auckland, which proved valuable. All of this discussion and suggestion shaped this thesis to a very large degree, helping me identify what it is about garden studies that fascinates me most and taking me in unanticipated but pertinent directions.

A great many 'civilians' also helped out. In drawing out my love of gardens I have to thank Bob Crowder and all the environmental activists I have worked with over the years who understand where gardens sit in the big picture. The list of names would be too long, but I mean particularly those within the Organic Garden City Trust and its projects, the community gardeners, the Soil & Healthers, as well as the Christchurch-Otautahi Agenda 21 Forum and the Sustainable Otautahi Christchurch committee. For encouraging my passion for the urban environment and challenging my understanding of it, I have to thank David Barwick. I must also thank Brendan Hoare of Unitech, Auckland, for encouraging me to do the Ph.D. in the first place and taking me seriously. In a similar sense, I'd like to thank Katherine Peet of Network Waitangi for greatly enriching my appreciation of the more profound dimensions of our local history, people and environment. Christine Dann's help in 2004 was incredibly transforming and launched me in the most extraordinary direction: thank you. I hope that this thesis will contribute in some way to the community that saw its genesis.

Countless others gave their time to this thesis in one way or another. I'd like to thank all of those who agreed to give interviews, loan photographs, draw garden plans, answer further questions, pass on contacts and write in their thoughts or recollections. It has been wonderful to meet so many great people and the thesis rests upon your input. Thanks also to the Canterbury Horticultural Society for use of their library, to the Soil & Health Canterbury branch for the long-term loan of archival materials, to Hamish Hopkinson of Soil & Health head office for helping me sort through the archive in Auckland, to Victoria Keene of the Christchurch Environment Centre for use of computer equipment, to Ruth Greenaway for loaning recording equipment, Andrew Fletcher, James Oxnam and Michele McCaw of the University of Canterbury for help with DVD technology and other IT issues, and to the staff at the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch Public Library, Land Information New Zealand Christchurch Office, Macmillan Brown Library, Archives New Zealand, the Sound Archives and the various other collections I have consulted.

Thanks to the administration staff in the School of History, especially to the legendary Judy Robertson. Thanks to the School of History for providing funding enabling me to get to Washington D.C., Melbourne, Perth and twice to Auckland. Thanks also to Dr. John Wood, former Ambassador to the United States of America and his wife Rose for hosting me in Washington in the New Zealand residence, an experience I'll not easily forget.

Like Claire Brennan, I need to thank Tom Baker for his early inspiration. Finally, thanks to my friends and family for the help you have given during the most unusual phase of my life to date. Time to regenerate.

# Abbreviations

<i>ACL</i>	Auckland City Libraries
<i>AJHR</i>	Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives
<i>ANZCRO</i>	Archives New Zealand, Christchurch Regional Office
<i>ATL</i>	Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington
<i>BWC</i>	British World Conference
<i>CB</i>	<i>The City Beautiful</i>
<i>CCL</i>	Christchurch City Libraries
<i>CGC</i>	Cashmere Garden Club
<i>CGCA</i>	<i>Christchurch Guardian and Canterbury Advertiser</i>
<i>CHS</i>	Canterbury Horticultural Society
<i>CSS</i>	<i>Christchurch Star-Sun</i>
<i>CM</i>	Canterbury Museum, Documentary Centre
<i>DMR</i>	Dove Meyer Robinson
<i>DO</i>	Garden and Landscape Studies Library, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C.
<i>F&amp;B</i>	<i>Forest &amp; Bird</i>
<i>GC</i>	<i>Gardeners' Chronicle</i>
<i>GCGI</i>	<i>Gardeners' Chronicle and Gardening Illustrated</i>
<i>HG</i>	<i>House &amp; Garden</i>
<i>ICHG</i>	International Conference of Historical Geographers
<i>LINZ</i>	Land Information New Zealand, Christchurch Office
<i>LT</i>	<i>Lyttelton Times</i>
<i>MB</i>	Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury
<i>NZHCCCB</i>	New Zealand Humic Compost Club, Canterbury Branch
<i>RNZSA</i>	Radio New Zealand Sound Archives, Christchurch
<i>RW</i>	Rayna Wootton Private Collection
<i>SLV</i>	State Library of Victoria, Melbourne

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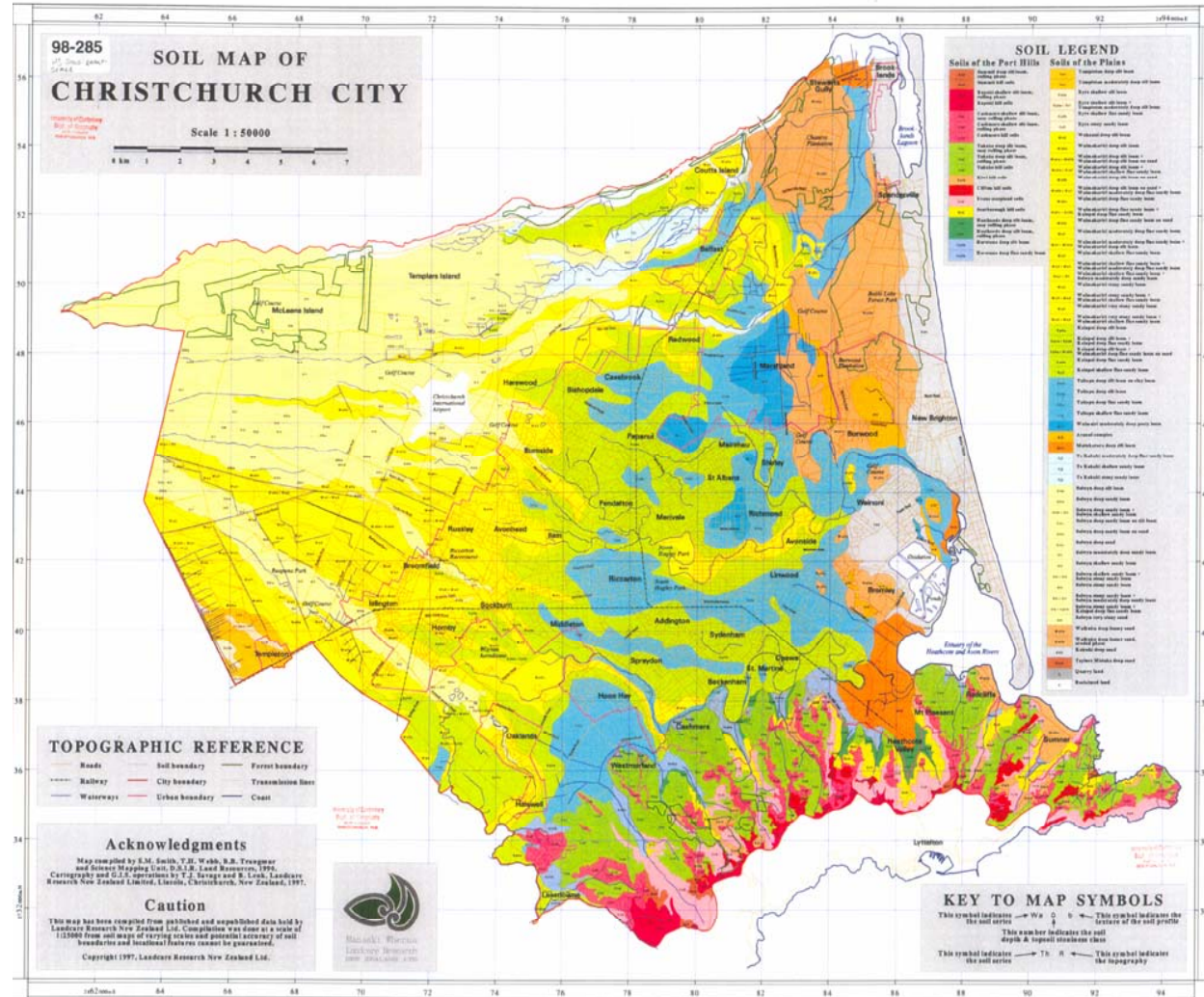
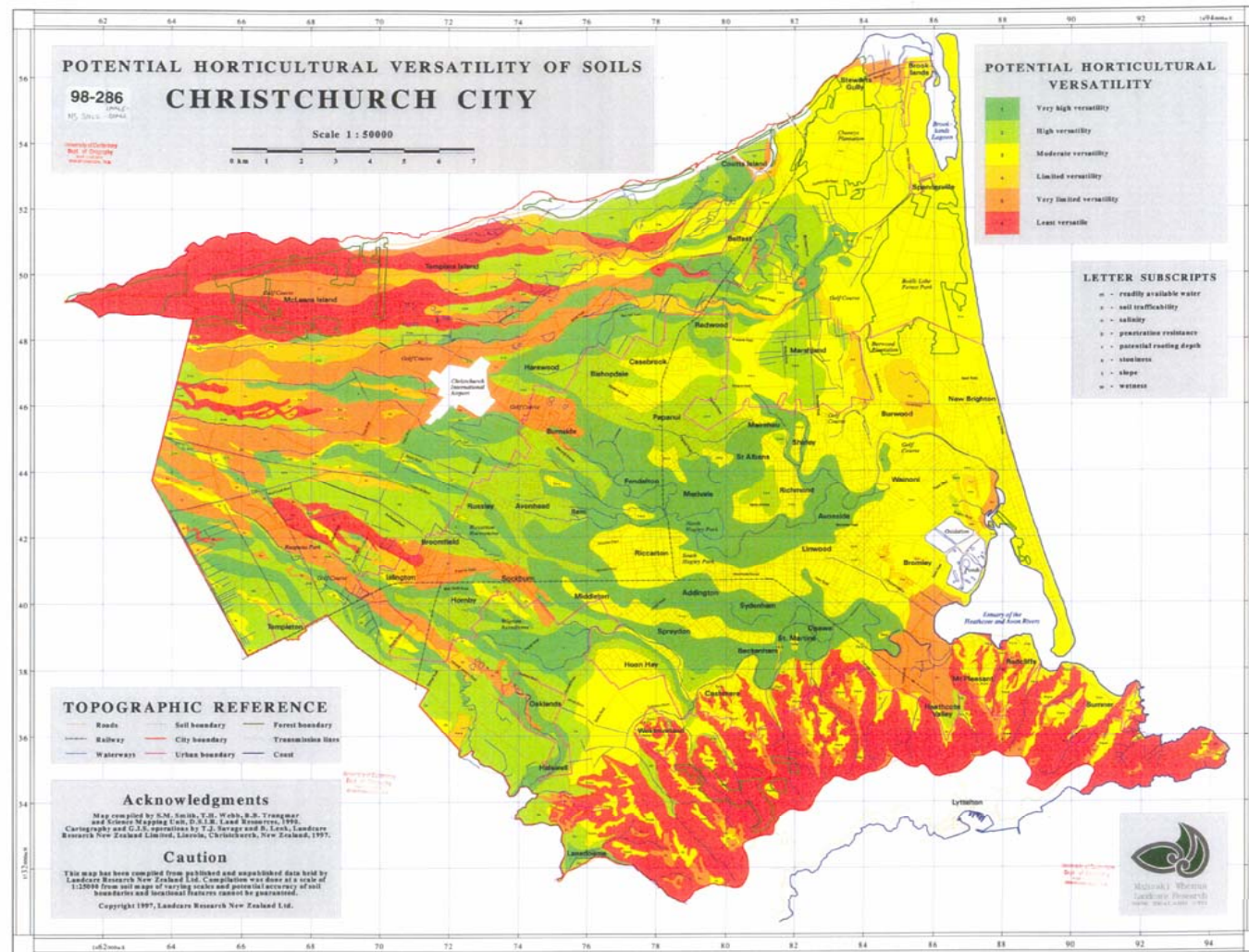


Figure 1: Soil Map of Christchurch City

Source: 98-285, Department of Geography Map Library, University of Canterbury

(Published by Landcare Research. Compiled by S. Smith, T. Webb, B. Trangmar and Science Mapping Unit, D.S.I.R., Land Resources, 1990. Cartography and G.I.S. operations by T. Savage and B. Lenk, Landcare Research New Zealand Limited, Lincoln, 1997. Reprinted with permission)



**Figure 2: Potential Horticultural Versatility of Soils, Christchurch City**

**Source: 98-286, Department of Geography Map Library, University of Canterbury**

**(Published by Landcare Research. Compiled by S. Smith, T. Webb, B. Trangmar and Science Mapping Unit, D.S.I.R., Land Resources, 1990. Cartography and G.I.S. operations by T. Savage and B. Lenk, Landcare Research New Zealand Limited, Lincoln, 1997. Reprinted with permission)**



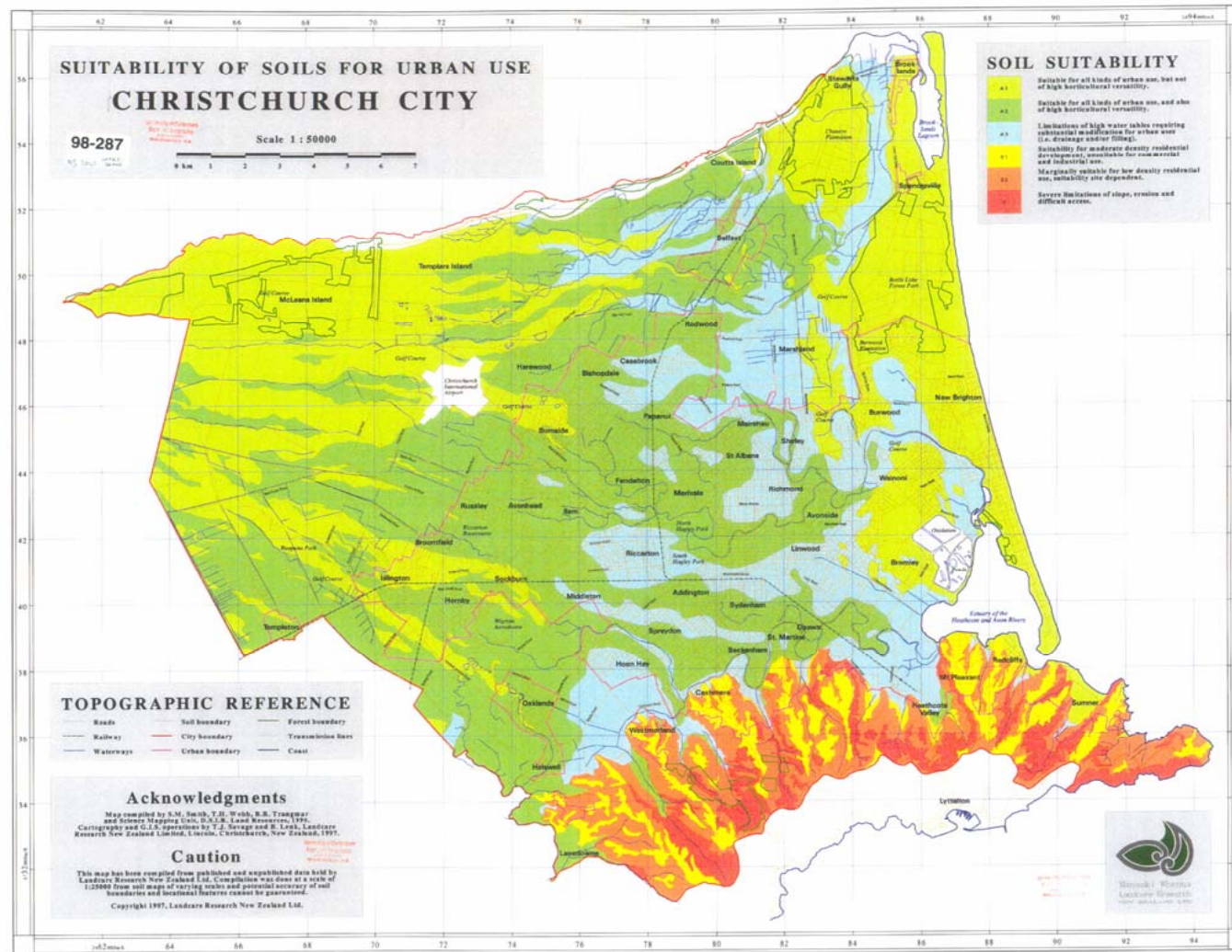
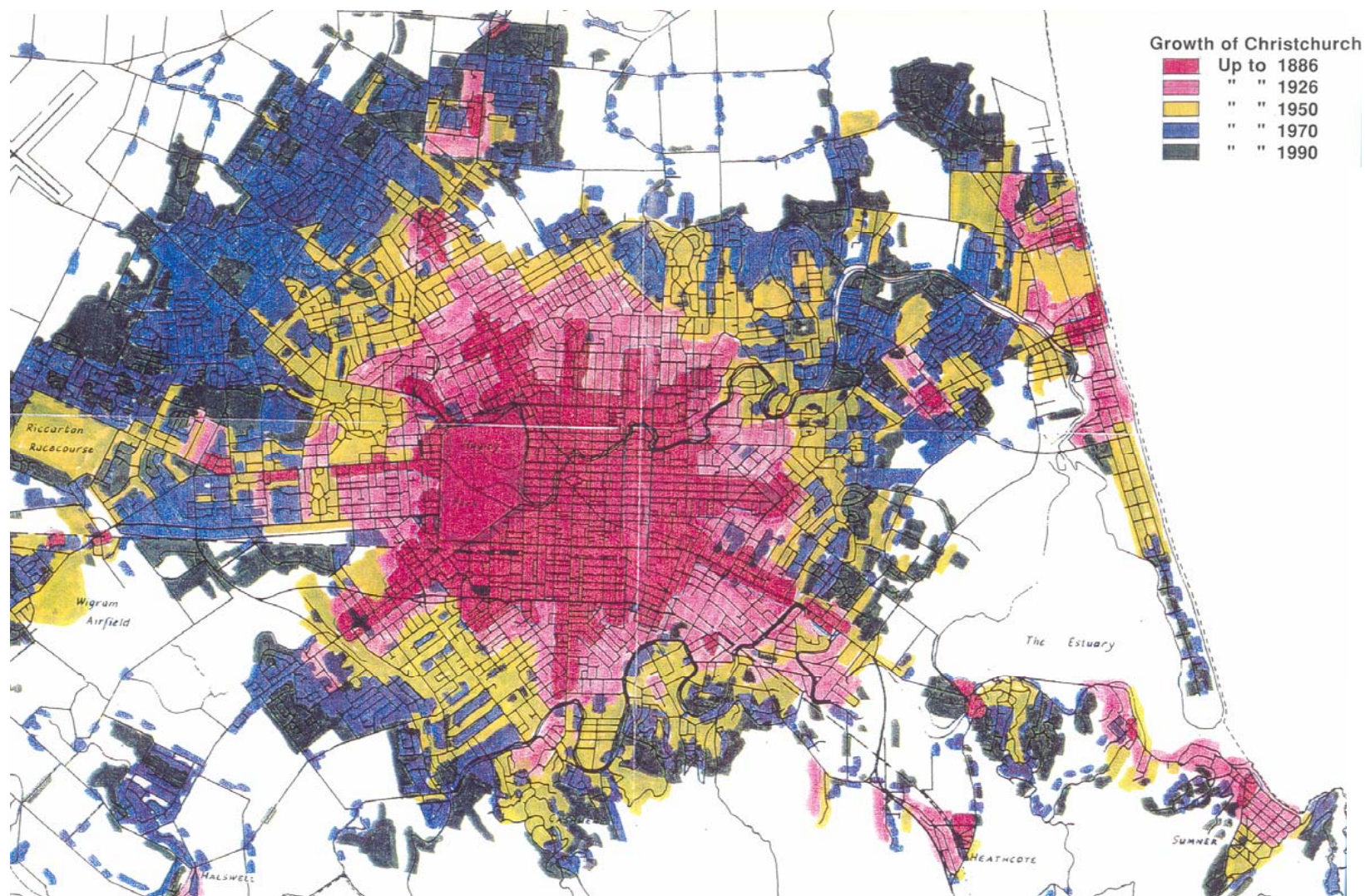


Figure 3: Suitability of Soils for Urban Use, Christchurch City

Source: 98-287, Department of Geography Map Library, University of Canterbury

(Published by Landcare Research. Compiled by S. Smith, T. Webb, B. Trangmar and Science Mapping Unit, D.S.I.R., Land Resources, 1990. Cartography and G.I.S. operations by T. Savage and B. Lenk, Landcare Research New Zealand Limited, Lincoln, 1997. Reprinted with permission)



**Figure 4: 'Growth of Christchurch', drawn by Christchurch City Council**  
**Source: Map Library, Department of Geography, University of Canterbury**



# Introduction

‘Paradise haunts gardens, and some gardens are paradise’, wrote Derek Jarman in 1995.<sup>1</sup> That paradise haunts gardens is an inescapable fact for garden historians, and not merely because the Persian word simply means garden, an enclosed space. Paradise remains, for those situated within the Judeo-Christian tradition, a basic mythological template perpetually visible in the organisation of nature by people in gardens. For colonies formed on islands, this was doubly so – islands, especially Pacific islands, were frequently mythologised within the European imagination as paradise.<sup>2</sup> New Zealand, emerging for Europeans out of Terra Australis Incognita, a great continent that turned out not to exist, was conceptualised as paradise before it had even been visited by Europeans. The country, therefore, was always a garden, or a potential garden. By the 1840s, the era of systematic colonisation, New Zealand was marketed as a variant of arcadia, a place of tremendous natural abundance that required tapping by hard working men.<sup>3</sup> As Philippa Mein Smith put it, the ‘New Zealand Company was a vast propaganda machine that set out to create towns and farms that would transplant civilisation to the New World and claim the wilderness as a garden.’<sup>4</sup> Indeed, agriculturists and gardeners were among those specifically sought out for the New Zealand colonies. New Zealand, as paradise, as garden, needs garden histories.

So too does Christchurch, generally recognised since the 1920s as the Garden City of New Zealand. This thesis argues that the idea of paradise was deployed in Christchurch from the time of official colonisation in 1850 as part of the apparatus of local government, and that this continued until the first visit of a reigning monarch just over one century later, in 1954. Idealised gardens, which followed fashions usually imported from Britain, were treated as exemplars, meant to affect the gardening practices of other householders. The intention was to control the use of land, the basis of colonial power. Gardening first helped establish settler space within an area rich with Ngai Tahu associations and resources, and then to disempower workers who were supposed to grow flowers rather than food, or at least to beautify the environment for social superiors at the expense of food provisioning. These approaches were underpinned with gardening advice columns and books, but especially by ritual-like

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<sup>1</sup> Derek Jarman, *Derek Jarman's Garden* (London, 1995), p.40

<sup>2</sup> Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific* (New Haven, 1985), pp. 141, 148; Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism* (Cambridge, 1995)

<sup>3</sup> Miles Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society 1850-1900* (Auckland, 1989), especially pp.29-42

<sup>4</sup> Philippa Mein Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand* (Cambridge, 2005), p.54

horticultural exhibitions and garden competitions, where the winners were publicly recognised as having manifested in their front and back yards certain virtues. The actual reach of these institutions into the lives of most gardeners remained limited, however, as other factors, particularly childhood experiences and neighbourhood associations restricted the influence of fashion.

This thesis is an attempt to focus on one Wakefieldian city and identify some of the meanings and uses of gardens in it. Because it starts from a premise that gardening, as an engagement with, and utilisation of land, is essentially a political activity, it departs from standard orthodoxies that Christchurch householders love gardening and that the city council provided the models householders utilised. It looks beyond platitudes about the beauty of private gardens and seeks to explicate the value statements appended to them. An example of these is found in the 1963 commemorative book on the Botanic Gardens' centenary. It stated that 'the Botanic Gardens are an influence for good in the community' and that this was 'readily acknowledged'. Christchurch was 'garden-conscious', as demonstrated by

the fact that in addition to the Canterbury Horticultural Society, there are within the metropolitan area six suburban horticultural societies, two beautifying associations, some fifty garden clubs and at least ten specialist societies such as those interested in the rose, lily, chrysanthemum, daffodil, cacti and succulent, native flora... Christchurch has a reputation of being the 'Garden City' of New Zealand. Strictly speaking, this is not true, but at least it is a city of gardens. This great love of gardens is largely due to the standard of horticulture maintained in the Botanic Gardens and in the parks and reserves of the city.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout the period under review in this thesis, the same sentiment was expressed: gardening was a moral act, and examples were 'an influence for good in the community'.

Gardening continues to be viewed in this way, and the moral pull of the 'Garden City' identity continues to be asserted. Now, as John Cookson has said, it is used to add to a clean and green image, partly to attract garden tourists.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, as the planet plunges further into an apparent environmental crisis, in part facilitated by unprecedented urbanisation, the Garden City is finding a new meaning as part of a 'sustainable city' identity. Community gardening, for example, has been hailed as an essential component of the city, for

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<sup>5</sup> M. Barnett, H. Gilpin, L. Metcalf (eds), *A Garden Century: The Christchurch Botanic Gardens 1863-1963* (Christchurch, 1963), pp.143-144

<sup>6</sup> John Cookson, 'Pigriums' Progress – Image, Identity and Myth in Christchurch', in John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall (eds), *Southern Capital: Christchurch, Towards a City Biography 1850-2000* (Christchurch, 2000), p.39

environmental as well as economic and social reasons.<sup>7</sup> Although the meaning is morphing, the relationship between the ‘Garden City’ idea and local identities is still maintained. The Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy process initiated by local government attracted seventy comments ‘about maintaining the “garden city” image and the maintenance of heritage as central to a sense of cultural identity.’<sup>8</sup> The 2006 draft Long Term Christchurch Community Plan, 100 years after the first reference to Christchurch as a Garden City, identified ‘strengthening the Garden City image’ as a priority.<sup>9</sup> The meaning of the Garden City for Christchurch, therefore, goes far beyond a proliferation of pretty front gardens, and it has always done so. Gardening in Christchurch has been a culturally loaded activity since the outset of colonisation.

### Scope

This study is limited to Christchurch, understood as a conceptual unit emerging out of a set of linked ecological zones between the Port Hills to the south, Pegasus Bay to the east, and the Plains to north and west. ‘Christchurch’, as a social process, is as dynamic as the ecological processes upon which it rests. These are highly varied but compactly located, making for resource rich environments. Because ‘Christchurch’ has evolved out of a variety of territorial authorities, ceding and amalgamating, with escalating suburban sprawl, it has never been a stable unit easily observable over time (see Figure 4). The definition of the city area employed here has attempted to allow for these on-going changes by accepting within the thesis purview those areas that fell within the urban limits by the end of the period in question. This was done regardless of which territorial authority they may have been part of and included some not part of Christchurch City Council even in 1954. Chief among these is Riccarton, which resisted amalgamation with the city until 1989, although its importance to the Canterbury colony was acknowledged before colonists even arrived. The most significant amalgamations prior to 1989 were in 1953, after which time ‘Christchurch City...

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Jonathon Pauling, *The Politics of Food : Urban Agriculture as a Radical Green Alternative to the Political Economy of Agriculture* (MA, University of Canterbury, 2001); Matt Morris, ‘The Organic City – Towards an Understanding’, *Organic NZ* September/October 2001, pp.42-43; Matt Morris, ‘Smith Street Community Gardens’, *Organic NZ* January/February 2002; Matt Morris, ‘New Zealand Community Garden Network’, *Organic NZ* May/June 2002, pp.50-51; Matt Morris, ‘Street Smart’, *The Press*, 4 May 2002; Matt Morris, ‘Common Sense, Community Spirit’, *The Press*, 29 June 2002; Matt Morris ‘Sustainable Future Common Sense’, *The Press*, 13 July 2003; Nick Tolerton and Guy Grant, ‘Rethink on ‘zero waste’ Condemned’, *The Star*, 4 May 2001; Michelle Hider, ‘City Council Backing Community Gardens’, *The Star*, 14 September 2001. The same idea is reiterated in Andrea Gaynor, *Harvest of the Suburbs: An Environmental History of Growing Food in Australian Cities* (Crawley, Western Australia, 2006), especially pp.194-200

<sup>8</sup> Report on the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy presented at UDS meeting, 18 July 2005, p.15

<sup>9</sup> ‘Summary of the Draft of Our Community Plan’ (Christchurch, 2006), p.7

corresponded with the urban area' except for Fendalton and Cashmere, which continued to remain separate,<sup>10</sup> and Riccarton. In this thesis the entire urban area to 1954 is under consideration.

The period considered, 1850-1954, also requires explanation. The choice to tackle slightly more than one hundred years of garden history in Christchurch reflects, though it does not resolve, a fundamental difficulty with garden history as a discipline. As gardens emerge literally out of the ground, with some elements remaining and others being altered, trees growing into new positions and environmental factors such as drainage making their effects known, all periodisation is arbitrary.<sup>11</sup> All gardening is masking, and to understand the mask one also needs to know what is being masked. The golden age of home gardening in Christchurch was undoubtedly the 1920s and 1930s. As this thesis shows the 1930s especially were the high point of the home garden competitions, for example. Yet the 1880s were also an important period, when gardening exhibitions were large and featured increasingly varied exhibits, and the newspapers carried columns drawing gardening advice directly from the British horticultural establishment based around Kew Gardens. But the 1850s, when the first European gardens were established – apart from the Deans' model garden at Riccarton – is equally significant. These first gardens were abundant with a wide range of fruit and vegetables, and it is this factor that ensured the periodisation of this thesis; the abundant food gardens of the 1850s set the pattern for the next century. The 1930s gardens of Christchurch simply cannot be understood without understanding the gardens of the first colonists. Nor can those gardens of the so-called Dig for Victory years of World War Two. The hundred year period therefore shows the persistence of gardening forms in their true light.

Given that approximately one hundred years was to be covered by the thesis, it may seem striking that the end date is not 1950 – the centenary – but 1954. 1950 was an important year for Christchurch, in which the triumphs of the 'pilgrims' were rehearsed and 'progress' was remarked upon as floridly as it had been in 1900. 1954, however, was more significant. Christchurch was able to show itself off as a fully-fledged Garden City in the first visit of a reigning monarch. It was the moment of truth for the city – the event it had been working towards for more than a century. English Christchurch hosting the Queen that year was the most important moment in the city's history at that time since 1850, and the welcome to the Queen and Duke made the most of the Garden City mythology, now truly entrenched. Furthermore, three notable horticulturists who feature prominently in this thesis – Morris

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<sup>10</sup> Peter Perry, 'A Geography of Governance', in Cookson and Dunstall (eds), p.291

<sup>11</sup> See also Robert Rotenberg on this point. Following Michel Foucault he argues that gardens are inherently heterochronic, accumulating meanings over time. Rotenberg, *Landscape and Power in Vienna* (Baltimore, 1995), p.21

Barnett, Lance McCaskill and T. D. Lennie – all achieved honours that year. 1953 saw a major reorganisation of local government, so territorially 1954 makes sense, especially since discussions at the time regarding town planning relied on the Garden City concept. 1953 and 1954 were also years in which new garden clubs formed. The 1950s would probably appear as a major turning point for home gardening if the period was extended further.

The thesis focuses particularly on what home gardeners grew in their gardens, how they did this, and how they learned to do this. The commercial world of horticulture is largely left out of the picture, save for the first plant nursery in Christchurch and one or two later business developments. Much good work on the nurserymen of Christchurch has already been undertaken.<sup>12</sup> My attention was given primarily to householders, who tended to place very little emphasis on the commercial world. The business side of gardening was important, of course, but a great deal of plant transference occurred through private channels of exchange, usually as gifts, and no doubt as collections of seed or cuttings from roadsides. Another distinction was between plants and livestock. It is clear that many householders raised poultry, for instance. Many also kept a horse; property advertisements give a good indication of the transition from household stables to ‘motor sheds’ and later ‘garages’. Chickens, horses and other animals were an integral part of the home gardening experience, especially concerning manures. Again, while this is acknowledged in the present thesis, I considered that the keeping of livestock was not strictly ‘gardening’. A detailed study of this particular area of the urban experience would require a separate thesis. Interestingly, bee keeping barely figured at all but, considering the importance of bees for pollination, it would be extremely useful for more research on the topic to be done.

## Method and Sources

The initial literature review revealed that while garden historians asked many questions of gardens, very little in the way of method had been devised. This was a result of the freshness of the new garden histories whose object was more social than art history. Knowing the city’s gardens depended on knowledge of gardening literature, a reliance on specific garden descriptions and photographs, and accessing personal archives. Garden histories of this type

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<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Allen Hale, *Pioneer nurserymen of New Zealand: compiled for the 50th anniversary of the New Zealand Horticultural Trades Association (Inc.)* (Wellington, 1955); Sydney Challenger, ‘Studies on Pioneer Canterbury Nurserymen (1) William Wilson’, *Annual Journal of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture*, No.6, 1978; Sydney Challenger, ‘Studies on Pioneer Canterbury Nurserymen (2) Wilson’s Major Competitors’, *Annual Journal of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture*, No.7, 1979

pose a myriad of problems, and Miles Fairburn's 'problem of generalising from fragmentary evidence'<sup>13</sup> was a prominent concern at all stages of the study. Obvious methodological problems presented themselves immediately. How could a meaningful study of *gardens* across a city be undertaken? There are thousands of gardens, all changing constantly. There are very few detailed records of gardens, and those extant usually describe the famous gardens of name designers with which this study is not primarily concerned. There are few photographs of gardens with clearly identifiable addresses. The reverse problem might have been an extensive archive of such things: for a whole city the study would be impossible.

From the outset, it was clear that oral histories would be a crucial source, allowing access to detailed descriptions of gardens as well as personal knowledge of their meanings. With this came a separate raft of problems: how should participants be selected, by what methods should the histories be collected, and the usual variety of difficulties inherent in oral history of memory, deliberate obfuscation, self-glorification, and other agendas. Most important, however, was to do with appropriate sample size. What sample size would be appropriate to the question? Could any sample be considered representative? How could this be confirmed? An equally important point was that there was no way oral histories could help cover the entire period; even obtaining material for the 1920s would be challenging.

Because I wanted to understand what was in gardens, why, and whether this varied across the city it was obvious that interviews needed to be organised according to location, so that study areas were required. This necessity raised another methodological question, which was not so much where the sample areas should be, but rather how they should be selected. A further question, as with the oral histories, was how many samples was enough? Would twenty samples be more robust than two, and how could this be established? These questions were predicated on the idea that sample areas could be identifiable, that somehow they would be demarcated as discrete units, but this again was an important consideration. Electoral boundaries were an arbitrary imposition that might reflect nothing of the cultures of neighbourhoods, if such cultures existed. The choice of boundary could therefore impinge markedly on the results.

Gardening literature across the period was a major source, although this also caused problems. As John Hammetter found for Milwaukee gardens, literature did not necessarily

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<sup>13</sup> Miles Fairburn, 'The Problem of Generalising from Fragmentary Evidence', in *Social History: Problems, Strategies and Methods* (London, 1999), pp.39-57



reflect practice.<sup>14</sup> It did, however, reflect the intentions and values of the writers. In my examination of these sources, which was centred primarily on newspapers and the journal of the Canterbury Horticultural Society, it became apparent that, alongside changes in fashion and practice, the actual significance of gardening literature was the role it ascribed to gardens within society. This role changed over time, and it was contested. Equally important was the relationship between the writers of these columns and the centres of political power. Most were associated with the Canterbury Horticultural Society, whose relationship with the City Council was very close indeed. Many were associated with both. Thus gardening literature could not, for the most part, explain a great deal about actual gardens, but it could, if read for more than simple changes in gardening fashion, potentially reveal something about the relationship between gardening ideas and expressions of power.

Aside from articles about gardening, particular gardening ideas were underpinned in Christchurch by garden competitions. Initially these were simple horticultural exhibitions, in which the best productions from households were displayed. Later the competitions included whole gardens, judged by professionals in ritual-like procedures. Winning competitors became model citizens, and their gardens were open to visitors for the express purpose of educating by physical example how a good garden could be created and maintained. An examination of the different types of competition indicated the suitability of different types of gardens to different parts of the city, offering a starting place for determining which sample areas would be most fruitful.

In order to ascertain something about the importance of gardening to householders, and what garden elements figured most highly for them, a database of *Press* property advertisements across the period from 1865 was established capturing all the available information on gardens. This was done in ten-yearly increments, and examined 1823 separate advertisements. Because these were an expression of what house-buyers and renters considered most desirable, this provided an extremely useful counterpoint to the pundits of garden fashions. The selling points of more than 900 gardens could therefore be classified, and major turning points could be established in gross terms. The data was also used as a further basis for identifying sample areas.

Sample areas were therefore identified inductively, based upon the evidence generated by these first sets of data. Initially, seven 'areas of interest' were chosen on the understanding that not all of these could be used due to limitations of word count. The method chosen for

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<sup>14</sup> John Hammetter, 'Gardening and Meaningful Lives: An Ethnography of Milwaukee-Area Residential Vernacular Gardens' (PhD thesis, Northwestern University, 2002), pp.130-131

identifying informants was a small advertisement in the gardening pages of the *Christchurch Press* (Appendix 1.i) in August 2005. This was specific about the period, issues and locations under investigation. It drew a number of responses, with a very uneven distribution by suburb. Of Merivale, Fendalton, the Avon Loop, Riccarton, North Linwood, Cashmere and Clifton, respondents were overwhelmingly from Merivale and Fendalton, with a smattering from Riccarton and Cashmere, and one from Linwood. This inevitably helped decide on the three areas that I finally chose. I pursued Clifton by contacting a member of the residents' association, and was put onto a number of people who participated fully. Fendalton correspondents in some cases put me onto further contacts who obligingly participated. The same was true for Riccarton, although to a lesser extent. Eventually I decided not to include Merivale, again because of considerations of length, and because Merivale gardens, in one sense, are Fendalton gardens writ small. A second *Press* notice, printed in January 2006, asked for more respondents from Cashmere and Clifton, but resulted in little further interest (Appendix 1.ii).

This process is highly pertinent to the process of doing garden history, because it reveals the networks of knowledge gardeners utilise to supplement their gardening. It showed either simply who reads the gardening pages, or else who reads the gardening pages *and* considers their recollections sufficiently interesting to be included in a Ph.D. thesis. This method, in fact, is a case study that demonstrates precisely the problem of using gardening columns as a source of information on garden practice. Only a relatively small proportion of the population can be assumed to engage directly with the information contained therein. It also suggested a limitation to this thesis. The pursuit of Clifton via other means was equally instructive. It was remarkably easy to track down a number of long-term residents of the area through one initial contact, which led to further contacts. My first point of contact was known to me as a colleague on the Christchurch-Otautahi Agenda 21 Forum and then Sustainable Otautahi Christchurch, and this personal knowledge seemed to help facilitate the process. In other words, a grass roots series of relationships and not the gardening pages of the newspaper was the mechanism for contact here, surprising given that the editor of the *Press* gardening pages lives on Clifton. Exactly this pattern was reflected in the methods of finding out new information on gardening in the case studies. Riccarton participants came either as written responses, or as default Riccarton residents who answered as Fendalton residents, a point explained in Chapter Seven. One interview resulted directly from the initial advertisement, one was suggested to me by Mary Lovell-Smith, and one was a past resident of Riccarton who also lived on Clifton. Those areas that attracted little or no response and were not further pursued leave a telling gap, which requires further investigation. The results of this method

must be taken into consideration when thinking about the impact of gardening literature on Christchurch gardens: its reach varies by suburb.

Responses from participants came either in the form of letters and emails, or more usually as formal, tape-recorded interviews. Interviewees were sent a letter explaining the project and a list of questions as a prompt sheet (Appendices 2.i. and 2.ii.). Interviews were conducted in a relaxed manner, with interviewees being able to discuss any facet of their garden/s that was most significant to them. Above all, they were open-ended, but guided by the prompt sheet, so that data reflected the participant's priorities while it could be broken down into standard groupings later. In addition, transcripts of the interviews were then sent back to participants to review, correct if necessary, and to give additional information if anything further sprang to mind. The interview was therefore treated both as raw data, but also as a starting point for 'jogging the memory'. This was done in the belief that articulation is a crucial component of memory retrieval, but not its end point. I wanted the fullest set of recollections to work with, and not merely those that happened to be discussed in a sixty-minute session. In the event, most participants did not add substantially to their transcripts, although they did often make slight alterations.

By its nature, the data generated through these interviews and pieces of correspondence usually could not be verified by any other means. In some cases, photographs were produced during interviews that showed graphically the plant materials and general layout of gardens. For all gardens discussed addresses were given, and these could therefore be traced through Land Information New Zealand for section sizes and title deeds, but this revealed very little about the actual gardens. These same sources, particularly the deposited plans for subdivisions, helped to obtain an impression of the patterns of subdivision to provide a solid context within which the interviews could be placed.

Throughout the thesis, recourse has also been made to diaries and correspondence deposited in the Canterbury Museum and the Canterbury Public Library, and the minutes of relevant City Council committees, and leasehold agreements held at Archives New Zealand in Christchurch. Minutes of the Christchurch Beautifying Association, deposited in the Canterbury Museum were helpful, as were the minutes and photographic collections of the Canterbury Horticultural Society which are held in their own archive. Photographic records at the Canterbury Museum and the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington were most useful, as were the records of the New Zealand Humic Compost Club, held by the Soil & Health Association of New Zealand head office in Auckland, Auckland City Libraries and the Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury. Ephemera from private collections has

been equally valuable. Comparative information on gardening literature from Britain and the United States was examined at the Garden Studies Library of Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C., and correspondence between Christchurch horticulturists and the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew was studied at the State Library of Victoria, Melbourne. Christchurch newspapers helped supplement details of Christchurch's various garden exhibitions and competitions.

## Outline

This is, therefore, a history of home gardening culture in a particular society and environment: Christchurch. Chapter One outlines the relevant international and national literature, arguing that such a study helps make sense of the nature of the colonial experience in New Zealand, but that this needs to take heed of urban environmental historians who urge that attention be paid to the relationships between culture and environment in the urban setting. The chapter argues that such an analysis sheds further light on the current discussion about 'the antipodes' as a framework for unpacking identity in New Zealand.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, as the home garden is a primary space of identity formation in this country, such an analysis is apposite. The chapter places the thesis within the literature on postcolonialism, and introduces aspects of ritual theory used by garden historians to unpack the roles some gardens play in their social and cultural context. It discusses the proposition emerging from Dumbarton Oaks in 2003 that certain kinds of gardens may play a role in the maintenance or change of cultural and social orders,<sup>16</sup> and suggests that in Christchurch, the winners of horticultural competitions may have belonged to such a model.

Chapters Two to Five examine gardening literatures organised around the four most significant gardening tropes of the period under review: 'abundance', 'beauty', 'protection' and 'sustenance'. Together these chapters establish a new typology for gardening literature around gardening tropes rather than periods of particular fashions, as seen in Thelma Strongman's *The Gardens of Canterbury* and Matthew Bradbury's *A History of the Garden in New Zealand*.<sup>17</sup> As with Helen Leach, emphasis is placed on garden elements rather than fashions, although the elements in question are different.<sup>18</sup> Returning to her earlier theme,

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<sup>15</sup> See John Pocock, *The Discovery of Islands* (Cambridge, 2005), pp.3-23; on Australia see Peter Beilharz, *Imagining the Antipodes* (Cambridge, 1997)

<sup>16</sup> Conan, 'Closing Remarks' (Symposium on Lay Ritual Practices in Gardens and Landscapes, Dumbarton Oaks, 2003), p.6

<sup>17</sup> Thelma Strongman, *The Gardens of Canterbury: A History* (Wellington, 1984); Matthew Bradbury (ed.), *A History of the Garden in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1995)

<sup>18</sup> Helen Leach, 'Analysing Change in the New Zealand Home Garden – By Style or Element?', *The New Zealand Garden Journal*, Vol.1, No.2, 1996

long-term continuities in garden use are of primary importance here,<sup>19</sup> especially regarding fruit and vegetable production. My focus on tropes above either elements or fashions mirrors Robert Rotenberg's work on Vienna,<sup>20</sup> although, as one would expect, the tropes deployed in Christchurch and Vienna are quite different. This approach makes explicit the meanings imposed on gardens 'from above', which the old art history mode of garden history tended to obscure. Each chapter does, however, deal with a different period, although these overlap considerably. Chapter Two begins with the pre-European environment and Maori uses of particular parts of it, drawing a connection between such uses and the first gardens of the settlers, beginning with the Deans brothers in the 1840s, but mostly with gardening in the new town from 1851 until the 1870s. It draws on diaries and correspondence as well as gardening columns and reports on the horticultural exhibitions to establish how central the idea of 'abundance' was to gardeners in this early period. The colonial imperative behind this message is also examined.

Chapter Three focuses expressly on beauty, from the 1860s the most consistently promoted gardening purpose until the end of the period in question. It notes the relevance of class in the discussion, where 'cottagers', especially, were to beautify. It continues the examination of horticultural exhibitions with their changed emphasis, and the development of home garden competitions proper. The chapter notes the relationship between the Garden City idea as it appeared in Christchurch from 1900 and its relationship with worker health, and continues to note the ideals of beauty as related to citizenship until the visit of Queen Elizabeth II in 1954, when all gardeners were called upon to beautify.

Chapters Four and Five focus mostly on twentieth century concerns related to a perceived decline in the well-being of 'Paradise'. Chapter Four looks at changing discourse around native plants from the 1860s to the 1920s, and focuses particularly on the interwar years during which native plants and rock gardens were promoted vigorously in relation to environmental despoliation. Protecting the environment could be achieved by creating what I have called 'mimetic landscapes', gardens that were meant somehow to capture the essential characteristics of the threatened wider environment. Here, hill gardens were particularly important and it was in these new gardening spaces, which looked out over the city to the mountains, that a new, 'antipodean' sense of self started clearly to emerge. While native plants could be exalted, so too were a vast array of plants from all over the planet, and it was their gathering together that hill gardens especially celebrated.

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<sup>19</sup> Helen Leach, *1,000 Years of Gardening in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1984)

<sup>20</sup> Rotenberg, p.21

Chapter Five combines the idea of physical sustenance with that of spiritual sustenance, and for many the two were indistinguishable. It covers the period from the 1920s to the 1950s and especially ‘Digging for Victory’ during World War Two. Specifically, it examines campaigns once again promoting vegetable production, linking this with a fast-growing urge to improve soil fertility, and the growth in technologies and techniques designed to accomplish this. Composting emerged as a particularly important activity during the war, when fears of putrefying matter were conquered by a sustained campaign. This chapter notes the radical aims of some individuals involved in vegetable and compost promotion, and their particular criticisms of ‘modern’ society. Their aims were overcome by the efforts of horticulturists within the ‘official’ sphere. The idea, however, of gardening in order to renew a lost relationship with God is a profound one and a motivating factor for a new collection of gardening promoters at this time, all of which suggests the ways in which gardens could be sites of social and cultural contestation within the Garden City.

Chapter Six tests the relevance of these themes against the property advertisements of the *Christchurch Press* 1865-1954, finding that the initial phase of abundance was indeed significant, and continued to be so until World War One, after which the front lawn predominated as the most noteworthy garden feature. A spatial distribution of the mentioned garden elements by suburb is also undertaken. This, along with the analyses of Chapters Two to Five, provided a rationale for selecting the seven areas mentioned above.

Of the seven, Riccarton, Fendalton, Clifton and Cashmere – the last two bracketed together as ‘the hills’ – were examined as case studies. Chapter Seven focuses on Riccarton, the first place of European gardening in the Christchurch area, and an important Maori site. It looks at both the original Riccarton estate and its evolution through gardens, as well as the gardens of the various Rural Sections on the south side of Riccarton Road. It argues for a marked social and cultural variation within the area. Chapter Eight examines Fendalton gardens, beginning with Fendall’s own homestead block, and discovers a Christchurch gardening type considerably different from any other. Understandings of the role of the garden contrast with those in Riccarton, and are characterised for the most part by a feeling of abundance, as well as of beauty. The gardens of Clifton and Cashmere are the subject of Chapter Nine. These gardens, in which environmental protection alongside physical and spiritual sustenance are clearly observable, again offer a total contrast with the other garden areas examined. These also show the beginnings of an antipodean perspective within Christchurch. Together, therefore, these chapters show how different gardening ideas attach to different places, in part to do with the householders, but also with environmental conditions and constraints. They suggest both that Christchurch was indeed a socially and culturally varied city, but also that

studies of vernacular gardens need to be specifically 'place-based' rather than positioned along a temporal continuum defined by evolving fashions.

The concluding chapter returns to the relationship between gardening literatures and the agendas supported thereby, and civic attempts to give life to those ideas through ritual-like activities such as horticultural exhibitions and garden competitions. It asks the question again whether in Christchurch gardens attracting ritual-like practices had anything to do with the maintenance of the social and cultural order, and finds that, despite the limitations of the question, indeed some gardens served this function. However, their efficacy was circumscribed by those same mechanisms for distributing and accessing gardening knowledge outlined above. Moreover, as covered in the case studies, relatively few householders were primarily motivated by a desire to have fashionable gardens. Tidy gardens were important, respectable gardens were often essential, but fashionable gardens were a very secondary consideration. While a particular gardening type was promoted, and the cloning of it encouraged, garden types or practices that provided a challenge regarding appropriate land use were very definitely isolated and excluded. This history of home gardening in Christchurch shows both the ways in which gardens were related to mechanisms of power in the city, and how these were circumscribed by alternative systems of knowledge transfer, economics, aspirations and environment.

# 1

## The Garden in History

### Introduction

Gardens, as academics are becoming increasingly aware, are sites of beauty, nostalgia, sustenance, tranquility, labour, domination, resistance and a multitude of other dimensions. They visually reflect prevailing social mores, while providing the means for being independent of them. Garden histories, however, have usually considered the garden as a site of beauty. As the literature on postcolonialism, environmental history, urban history and garden studies evolve, it seems clear that combined they provide a framework for exploring aspects of cultural and social history of former colonies. This chapter introduces themes of the British Empire's fragmentary nature and the various contingencies shaping the colonial experience within it. It also examines themes in urban environmental history, particularly regarding the problem of relating culture and nature within an urban setting, and how this, in the same vein as postcolonial literature, must unsettle arguments propounding the existence of an imposed, metropolitan, hegemonic system of ideas. Recent trends in garden studies are then discussed to demonstrate the ways in which gardens may help specifically in examining the nature of the colonial experience in Christchurch. The literature review then turns more specifically to the New Zealand historiography on gardens, and highlights the focus on social conformity and gender relations inherent in suburban garden maintenance. Finally, the few histories of Christchurch gardens are discussed as a basis from which to develop this particular study.

### The Colonist in Postcolonial Literature

It is generally agreed among scholars that postcolonial studies – sometimes referred to as 'postcolonialism' – emerged out of Edward Said's groundbreaking 1978 work *Orientalism*, and its focus on the 'west's' construction of the 'Orient'.<sup>1</sup> However, by the later 1990s the field had diversified to include the study of 'settler colonies', including those of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Postcolonialism's contribution has gone beyond questioning the

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Concepts of the Orient* (London, 1978). For an excellent summary of the various gaps in Said's argument, see Bart Moore-Gilbert, *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices and Politics* (London, 1997), pp.40-53. John MacKenzie's *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (Manchester, 1995) in which he charges that 'Said and his followers fail at a fundamental level to understand both imperial history and historiography', is discussed on p.14.



legitimacy of the colonial project and critiquing it, even vilifying it, to questioning the assumption that the British Empire was as monolithic as it saw itself and as its later critics believed it to be. New histories of the British Empire, for example the work of John MacKenzie,<sup>2</sup> tend to emphasise the fragmented nature of the British imperial system and the relative autonomy of citizens at the periphery. ‘The British Empire, vast and apparently despotic as it seemed, was in reality a ramshackle conglomerate, very far from the all-seeing, all-powerful monolith envisaged by Edward Said and his followers among the discourse theorists.’<sup>3</sup> This is true for Christchurch, the most thoroughly planned of the Wakefieldian settlements, where the colonists asserted their independence from the imperial centre almost immediately.

Not that this alters the fact that the colonists had an enormous impact on the spaces they occupied, but the point that settler colonists occupied an ambiguous space between indigenous and metropolitan culture has gained traction. Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson in their 2000 article ‘Settler Colonies’ took up precisely this point. The historical factors of settlement, they said,

produced, in many cases, the feeling of being colonized – of being European subjects but no longer European citizens. Settler postcolonial theory commonly describes this phenomenon in the axiom: the settler is both colonized and colonizing. This colonization was experienced politically, culturally, and socially... At the same time, of course, the settler was an agent of colonial rule over the proportionally, and usually numerically, shrinking indigenous population.<sup>4</sup>

Robert Young, in a similar vein, asked of these colonists: ‘are the non-indigenous people in the former colonies of North America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand colonizers or colonized?’<sup>5</sup> In fact, he argued, they were neither:

The *colons* quickly found themselves in-betweens: neither the centre, the metropolitan government, which could both protect them and oppress them, nor the colonized, the indigenous natives whom the *colons* would for the most part slaughter, expel from their own lands, or exploit as a labour force, and from whose perspective the *colons* and the metropolitan government would be equated.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> John MacKenzie, *Empires of Nature and the Nature of Empires: Imperialism, Scotland and the Environment* (East Linton, Scotland, 1997)

<sup>3</sup> John MacKenzie, ‘Empire and the Ecological Apocalypse: the Historiography of the Imperial Environment’, in Tom Griffiths and Libby Robin (eds), *Ecology and Empire: Environmental History of Settler Societies* (Edinburgh, 1997), p.219

<sup>4</sup> Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, ‘Settler Colonies’, in H. Schwarz and S. Ray (eds), *An Introduction to Postcolonial Studies* (Malden, Massachusetts, 2000), p.363

<sup>5</sup> Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Malden, Massachusetts, 2001), p.19

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.19

This ambiguous position occupied by the settlers of these societies, where their conduct navigated a path between preconceived ideas about how to live in the new place, and the widely varying exigencies of their particular situations, again emphasises the fragmentary nature of the British Empire.

The observations of these settler postcolonial theorists also show that the settlers took it upon themselves to create new political and economic systems where they settled, at the expense of any indigenes present, but also possibly independent of the metropolis. For Christchurch, both of these forms of independence are true. Local Maori were contained in reserves at the fringes of the settlement and denied political and economic advantages that were guaranteed to them. Similarly, however, the colonists soon demanded independence from the Canterbury Association in London and insisted on the primacy of local decision-making. John Robert Godley, the Association's Agent in Christchurch and founder of the new colony, was the chief example of this. The Association wrote to Godley in 1851 to say:

I must frankly tell you that we have been taken by surprise at the demand of the Council of Colonists to have all our powers transferred to themselves. Anxious as we are to see those principles of local self-government, which many of us have advocated in Parliament and elsewhere fully carried out, I can see in the Council of Land purchasers, no sufficient instrument to work with.<sup>7</sup>

The wrangling was a sensational controversy; in the end, the colonists won out. If, as Johnston and Lawson insist, the 'settler' 'emerges from the material and textual enactments and enunciations of imperial power as a crucial site for the investigation of colonial power at work',<sup>8</sup> Christchurch colonists need to be understood as marking out independent space, from London as well as from indigenes. The idea that Christchurch gardens simply recreated old England must therefore be questioned.

### **Cultural Constructions of Landscape**

Literature generated from the late 1980s by cultural historians has engaged with the idea of cultural appropriation of sites valued by indigenes throughout empire. Paul Carter's 1988 book *The Road to Botany Bay* examined the process of mapping and naming Australian Aboriginal space in a way that made it real and able to be occupied by Europeans. 'Pools, pastures and tracks were taken out of context and used, like quotations, to symbolize their own historical presence... Here was a country *waiting* to be occupied... The result was the

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<sup>7</sup> W. C. Jarvis to John Robert Godley, 9 September 1851, J. R. Godley and E. G. Wakefield Correspondence, Box 3, Vol. 3, p.691, 475/50, *CM*

<sup>8</sup> Johnston and Lawson, p.368

collapse of aboriginal space...'<sup>9</sup> Carter wished to move beyond imperial history, 'which reduces space to a stage, that pays attention to events unfolding in time alone'<sup>10</sup> and which tends to make indigenes invisible. He argued that, for the early European settlers, the Aborigines 'were not physically invisible, but they were culturally so, for they eluded the cause-and-effect logic that made the workings of history plain to see.'<sup>11</sup> In these ways Carter's postcolonial approach to the reconceptualisation of indigenous space fits other postcolonial work about the subjugation of indigenous peoples. Carter's innovation was in the centrality he demanded be afforded to space as a dimension of the historical plane, and he was adamant that this space was a cultural construction. '[L]est there be any misunderstanding,' he said, 'let it be stressed again: this book's subject is not a physical object, but a cultural one. It is not the geographer's space, although that comes into it. What is evoked here are the spatial forms and fantasies through which a culture declares its presence.'<sup>12</sup> Here Carter was talking about space as it is constructed in the mind, and the cultural underpinnings of that construction.

In a similar way, Simon Schama's *Landscape and Memory* of 1995 attempted to analyse the ways in which culture creates landscape.<sup>13</sup> The proposition raised by Schama was to use cultural history to bridge the division in the Western mind between culture and nature.<sup>14</sup> He believed his own work to be more sensitive to cultural aspects of environmental change than that of environmental historians, who have 'lamented the annexation of nature by culture.'<sup>15</sup> A variation on this sentiment was echoed in a work of the same year, Geoff Park's *Nga Uruora: The Groves of Life*, a foray by a New Zealand ecologist into a mix of New Zealand cultural and environmental history. Park's book sought to inspire a desire to live in a sort of intimate empathy with 'nature': for culture to spring from the ground. He looked for moments of recognition in his sources where actors see 'a fleeting prospect of co-existence with the pattern of nature that had created... fertility – a brief possibility of a way of life *with* Nature that learnt *from* it.'<sup>16</sup> It fits into a tradition of eco-spiritual literature described in this thesis, especially in Chapter Five. Whereas Schama sought to show the ways in which nature and

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<sup>9</sup> Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay* (New York, 1988), pp.344-345

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xvi

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xx

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xxii

<sup>13</sup> '[A]lthough we are accustomed to separate nature and human perception into two realms, they are, in fact, indivisible. Before it can ever be a repose for the senses, landscape is the work of the mind. Its scenery is built up as much from strata of memory as from layers of rock'; 'Even the landscape that we suppose to be most free of our culture may turn out, on closer inspection, to be its product.' Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (London, 1995), pp.6,9

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p.14

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p.12

<sup>16</sup> Geoff Park, *Nga Uruora: The Groves of Life – Ecology and History in a New Zealand Landscape* (Wellington, 1995), p.73

culture have worked closely together – a difficult objective – Park sought the collapsing of those categories altogether. He also lamented the loss of indigenous ecosystems and their replacement by European cropping regimes. The implicit condemnation of Empire in Park's book on grounds as much spiritual as ecological warrants its inclusion in an examination of different varieties of postcolonial literature, and accords it a special place within New Zealand's works of that ilk.

One of the more recent contributions to New Zealand's postcolonial literature returned to the work of Carter for inspiration. Giselle Byrnes' *Boundary Markers: Land Surveying and the Colonisation of New Zealand*, 2001, a spatial history in Carter's mould, used surveyors' journals to chronicle the mapping and naming of New Zealand as a means of appropriating space. 'Colonisation demanded... that cultural space be absolute, one and indivisible, and rendered with a homogeneity that negated or obscured difference.' She pointed to a contradiction in this process, whereby movement over land was encouraged, but that 'it sought to erase the prior meaning of that space and inscribe it with new definitions.'<sup>17</sup> Like Carter, she made the point that in 'naming an already known place, land surveyors were writing over and appropriating earlier histories.'<sup>18</sup> Like other postcolonialists at the turn of the millennium, Byrnes' analysis of surveyors, as agents of colonisation, downplayed their actual power as it manifested in the field.

The land surveyors who laid out the land preparatory to and during the British colonisation and settlement of New Zealand exercised considerable power: the power to revisualise the land and to capture it on maps and in place names. At the conceptual level and on a national basis this power was formidable. But an exploration of surveyors' own texts suggests that their power 'on the ground' was much more circumscribed. In part, the land itself presented limitations. Land purchasers and would-be colonisers, often armed with little knowledge of the actual topography and terrain, assumed that a tidy symmetrical map could simply be superimposed on the land...<sup>19</sup>

Byrnes' explanation for this foregrounds the role the landscape played in actually retarding the colonial agenda. This crucial point highlights the need to take into account the nature of physical environmental conditions in any re-examination of the colonial period.

Unsurprisingly, environmental historians have been somewhat sceptical about the works of cultural historians. Schama's *Landscape and Memory* was described diplomatically by John MacKenzie, the year following its release, as 'a dense, post-modernist and very personal

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<sup>17</sup> Giselle Byrnes, *Boundary Markers: Land Surveying and the Colonisation of New Zealand* (Wellington, 2001), p.50

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.77

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.124

work... which... explored the cultural construction of aspects of the natural world within a European nationalist framework.<sup>20</sup> By 1997, however, in a collection of essays on ecology and empire, this view had mutated into scathing criticism: ‘Schama... renders his study of the nationalist constructions of landscape within Europe almost unreadable through his labyrinthine, post-modernist and obtrusively personal approach.’<sup>21</sup> This scrap between the cultural historian and the environmental historian has only served to emphasise the binary Schama complained about.

### **Environmental Histories of the British Empire**

Environmental history’s contribution to the history of the British Empire, and thus to postcolonial studies, has followed roughly the same trajectory as the broad postcolonial field. Lucille Brockway’s 1979 book *Science and Colonial Expansion* argued that the economic power of the British Empire was derived from its utilisation of plant materials found across the globe, collected by colonial botanists and studied in a network of colonial botanic gardens, all bowing towards Kew. Thus Brockway positions Kew Gardens at the very centre of Empire, and paints it as an enormously powerful institution. ‘[T]he Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew,’ she said, ‘directed and staffed by eminent figures in the British scientific establishment, served as a control centre which regulated the flow of botanical information from the metropolis to the colonial satellites, and disseminated information emanating from them.’<sup>22</sup> Nearly twenty years later, Donal P. McCracken, in his *Gardens of Empire: Botanical Institutions of the Victorian British Empire*, echoed Brockway’s argument. ‘[By] 1901 gardening was more than just a pastime. It was an adjunct to imperialism, and the 100 or so British colonial botanic gardens in existence were as much a part of British imperialism as were the fleets of the Royal Navy or the soldiers of the queen.’<sup>23</sup>

Brockway’s ‘conspiratorial twist’, as MacKenzie referred to it<sup>24</sup> sits within a literature of imperial control of nature epitomised by Alfred Crosby in his sweeping 1986 study of human expansion since the Neolithic Revolution, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion*

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<sup>20</sup> MacKenzie, *Empires of Nature and the Nature of Empires*, p.xi

<sup>21</sup> MacKenzie, ‘Empire and the Ecological Apocalypse: the Historiography of the Imperial Environment’, in Tom Griffiths and Libby Robin (eds), *Ecology and Empire: Environmental History of Settler Societies* (Edinburgh, 1997), pp.225-226

<sup>22</sup> Lucille Brockway, *Science and Colonial Expansion: the Role of the British Royal Botanic Gardens* (New York, 1979), p.7

<sup>23</sup> Donal P. McCracken, *Gardens of Empire: Botanical Institutions of the Victorian British Empire* (London, 1997), p.x

<sup>24</sup> MacKenzie, *Empires of Nature and the Nature of Empires*, p.14

of *Europe, 900-1900*.<sup>25</sup> Much more ambitious than the title suggests – he dwelt on the prehistoric period as well – Crosby argued that European expansion into new territories, particularly in temperate zones, was facilitated by an ‘ecological portmanteau’ which accompanied humans, made alien territories biologically familiar and helped displace indigenes, particularly with regards to the spread of disease. Really, this was a perpetuation of Ernest Dieffenbach’s ‘displacement theory’ of the nineteenth century.<sup>26</sup> Crosby argued that the European biota was stronger than that found in the New World, which he said accounted both for the fact that it rapidly overcame and displaced New World ecosystems, transforming them into ‘Neo-Europes’, and that plant materials, in particular, from the New World failed to perform well in the so-called Old World.<sup>27</sup> MacKenzie rightly refuted Crosby on this last suggestion.<sup>28</sup> Crosby chose New Zealand as his case study with which to elaborate his thesis,<sup>29</sup> which is perhaps why Park, in *Nga Uruora*, followed Crosby so unquestioningly.<sup>30</sup>

These interpretations of empire’s impact on the environment have been described as ‘apocalyptic’ by MacKenzie, whose own work – particularly *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism*, 1988 – depicted a much more nuanced view. MacKenzie highlighted the acknowledgement within the imperial system of environmental degradation, especially with regards to declining populations of native fauna, and thence the move towards conservationist policies. These policies served to consolidate British rule over lands occupied, rather than to meet the needs of indigenous peoples who had, in the

<sup>25</sup> Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (Cambridge, 1986)

<sup>26</sup> ‘... the number of aborigines in New Zealand rapidly decreases – a strange and melancholy, but undeniable, fact! It may be that it is one of Nature’s eternal laws that some races of men, like the different kinds of organic beings, plants, and animals, stand in opposition to each other; that is to say, where one race begins to spread and increase, the other, which is perhaps less vigorous and less durable, dies off.’ Ernest Dieffenbach, *Travels in New Zealand*, Vol. 2 (London, John Murray, 1843), pp.14-15

<sup>27</sup> ‘Old World organisms are almost always “superior” when the competition takes place in their home environment. Hence the tiny number of Neo-European weeds, varmints, and pathogens naturalized in the Old World, and the success of the portmanteau biota wherever colonial environments have been Europeanized.’ Ibid., p.291

<sup>28</sup> MacKenzie, *Empires of Nature and the Nature of Empires*, p.14

<sup>29</sup> ‘New Zealand,’ he said, ‘in terms of population and culture, is the most British of all the lands that were once major colonies of England. The pakeha ships, starting with Cook’s *Endeavour*, accomplished that end by sailing into New Zealand and depositing there the tools, weapons, gegaws, and ideas, and, most important, the organisms, of the continental societies. These ships were like giant viruses fastening to the sides of a gigantic bacterium and injecting into it their DNA, usurping its internal processes for their own purposes.’ Crosby, p.227. It would perhaps be too facetious to note that viruses do not in fact have DNA, but rather RNA.

<sup>30</sup> Park, *Nga Uruora*, eg. p.57, where Crosby’s pre-requisites for the Europeanisation of a country are given. Park is very clear about the destruction to New Zealand’s environment by European colonisation of it. ‘Nothing in these paddocks carries any sense of the ‘immense woods’ that James Cook saw here – they were destroyed to produce them – nor is anything likely to be as enduring... [W]hat is scary here – if you have some scent of what it was like a century ago – is the flash of time it has taken to reduce this ecosystem’s amassed, natural capital to this worn, meagre residue. New Zealand’s colonial history carries the reason why.’ Ibid., p.24

meantime, experienced dispossession.<sup>31</sup> This general theme was picked up in 1995 by Richard Grove in his important book *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1860*. Grove's aim was to chronicle the rise of conservationism and environmentalism as a direct result of imperialist experiences in peripheral colonies, especially those on islands. Grove portrays colonial conservationism as a mechanism to resolve the paradox between western constructions of tropical islands as paradises, and 'the destructive impact of metropolitan capitalism on the tropical island at the European periphery'.<sup>32</sup> He stated that in fact 'the hypothesis of a purely destructive environmental imperialism does not appear to stand up at all well', both because 'rapid and extensive ecological transition was frequently a feature of pre-colonial landscapes and states', and, pre-empting MacKenzie, because empire was never that strong. '[It] has become increasingly clear,' he said, in part answering MacKenzie's earlier work on hunting, and Crosby's general thesis, 'that there is a need to question the more monolithic theories of ecological imperialism, which seem to have arisen in part out of a misunderstanding of the essentially heterogeneous and ambivalent nature of the workings of the early colonial state.'<sup>33</sup> Grove referred to Brockway's thesis in a similar vein.<sup>34</sup> He emphasised local conditions shaping colonial responses. In some cases this even involved learning from the environmental knowledge of indigenous populations, with implications for the emergence of colonial botanical gardens.<sup>35</sup>

Grove, in discussing the early colonial desire to 'discover' Paradise, argued that the tropical island as well as the garden

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<sup>31</sup> MacKenzie, *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism* (Manchester, 1988), p.297

<sup>32</sup> Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1860* (Cambridge, 1995), p.72

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7. He also makes the point that this situation remained until at least the mid nineteenth century.

<sup>34</sup> Referring to both Brockway's *Science and Colonial Expansion*, and D. Mackay's *In the Wake of Cook: Exploration, Science and Empire, 1780-1807*, Grove says: 'Both writers attach exclusively utilitarian and/or exploitative and hegemonic motivations to the early development of science in the colonial... context and ignore the potential for contradictory reformist or humanitarian motivations'. Grove, note 21, pp.7-8

<sup>35</sup> See especially Ch.2, 'Indigenous Knowledge and the Significance of South-West India for Portuguese and Dutch Constructions of Tropical Nature', pp.73-94. In his introduction, Grove states that the 'available evidence shows that the seeds of modern conservationism developed as an integral part of the European encounter with the tropics and with local classifications and interpretations of the natural world and its symbolism. As colonial expansion proceeded, the environmental experiences of Europeans and indigenous peoples living at the colonial periphery played a steadily more dominant and dynamic part in the construction of new European evaluations of nature and in the growing awareness of the destructive impact of European economic activity on the peoples and environments of the newly 'discovered' and colonised lands.' *Ibid.*, p.3

... proved central to the task of giving a meaning and epistemology to the natural world and to western interactions with it... Both offered the possibility of redemption, a realm in which Paradise might be recreated or realised on earth, thereby implying a structure for a moral world in which interactions between people and nature could be morally defined and circumscribed.<sup>36</sup>

This desire to create paradises – a Persian word in fact meaning garden – is a critical aspect of this thesis, where Michel Foucault's theoretical version of this idea is employed to unpack the work of organisations such as the Canterbury Horticultural Society and the Christchurch Beautifying Association. Foucault's notion of the 'heterotopia' is discussed in more detail below.

Since 1997 a considerable number of new environmental histories of the Empire's periphery have appeared. *Ecology & Empire: Environmental History of Settler Societies*, published that year, in many respects defined the agenda for this work.<sup>37</sup> New Zealand, although not well represented in that collection of essays, which centred on Australia, has benefited from the general interest.<sup>38</sup> A major attempt to gather a range of ideas on the environmental history of New Zealand was achieved with the publication in 2002 of *Environmental Histories of New Zealand*,<sup>39</sup> followed soon after by an entire issue of *Environment & History* being devoted to New Zealand.<sup>40</sup> The New Zealand Historical Association (NZHA) Conference of 2003 featured an environmental history stream, for the first time. In 2006, a New Zealand newsletter was launched aimed specifically at environmental historians.<sup>41</sup> Among the many themes raised in this welter of scholarly activity, two strands are noteworthy for this thesis.

The first is attention to the urban environment. In 'The Historiography of Environmentalism: Apocalypse, Neo-Whiggism and New Perspectives' MacKenzie noted the lack of work on 'city and town environments, surely a major aspect of environmental history and concern'.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p.13

<sup>37</sup> Tom Griffiths and Libby Robin (eds), *Ecology and Empire: Environmental History of Settler Societies* (Edinburgh, 1997). Griffiths, in his introduction, pays homage to Alfred Crosby's pioneering work, and says, 'This book looks back at European expansion from the so-called colonized 'peripheries', the settler societies, and uses one of those societies – Australia – to shed new light on a comparative environmental history.' Griffiths himself seeks to scrutinise 'changing interpretations of ecological imperialism in the Australian setting to illustrate the way in which environmental histories of the 'edges' of empire are destabilizing traditional narratives of world history.' The need for comparative research along these lines is particularly stressed. See Tom Griffiths, 'Ecology and Empire: Towards an Australian History of the World', in Griffiths and Robin (eds), p.1

<sup>38</sup> Graeme Wynn, in a similar vein, asked whether 'a New Zealand-centred perspective might throw new light on larger questions about empire of nature and nature and empire in the nineteenth century'. See Graeme Wynn, 'On the Edge of Erewhon: Nature and Empire in New Zealand' (ICHG, Auckland University, 2003)

<sup>39</sup> Eric Pawson and Tom Brooking (eds), *Environmental Histories of New Zealand* (Oxford, 2002)

<sup>40</sup> *Environment & History*, Vol.9, No.4, 2003

<sup>41</sup> James Beattie, Charles Dawson and Matt Morris (eds), *Environment and Nature in New Zealand Newsletter*, March 2006. <http://cres.anu.edu.au/envirohist/eh-nz.html>. Accessed 2 June 2006



Eric Pawson contributed to the field of urban environmental history in both 'Confronting Nature' in *Southern Capital* and in 'On the Edge: Making Urban Places', in *Environmental Histories of New Zealand*. Ian Morley, in a paper presented to the NZHA in 2003 entitled 'Medical Developments, Public Health and the Capitalist System: Victorian Environmental Improvement', looked closely at the relationships between Victorian health concerns and the town planning movement. His paper positioned the town planning movements of Scotland as leaders in the field, noting they were ten years ahead of similar developments in England and Wales. His attention to the Garden City Movement and the increasing importance within this discourse placed upon green space conveniently tied urban environments and garden history together, albeit within a British context. Robert Freestone, well-known for his work on the Garden City movement in Australia, gave a paper at the International Conference of Historical Geographers, also in 2003, entitled 'An Historical Geography of Urban Open Space: The Case of the Internal Reserve'. It dealt with discrepancies between planning for greenspace within suburban developments and their actual uses in those suburbs at the edge of empire.<sup>42</sup>

The second strand, from Helen Leach's contribution to *Environmental Histories*, to John MacKenzie's 2003 keynote address to the New Zealand Historical Association, and to a number of papers presented the same year to the International Historical Geographer's conference at Auckland University, has been the astonishing acknowledgement of gardens as sites of historical interest.<sup>43</sup> The 2004 British World Conference featured two papers on the relationship between making gardens and creating identity on the fringe of empire, in Australia.<sup>44</sup>

### Urban Environmental History

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<sup>42</sup> MacKenzie, *Empires of Nature and the Nature of Empires*, p.22; Eric Pawson, 'Confronting Nature', in Cookson and Dunstall (eds), *Southern Capital* (Christchurch, 2000), pp.60-84; Eric Pawson, 'On the Edge: Making Urban Places', in Pawson and Brooking (eds), pp.200-213; Ian Morley, 'Medical Developments, Public Health and the Capitalist System: Victorian Environmental Improvement', (NZHA, University of Otago, 2003); Robert Freestone, 'An Historical Geography of Urban Open Space: The Case of the Internal Reserve' (ICHG, Auckland University, 2003)

<sup>43</sup> Helen Leach, 'Exotic Natives and Contrived Wild Gardens: The Twentieth Century Home Garden', in Pawson and Brooking (eds), pp.214-229; MacKenzie, 'Missionaries and Medics, Botanists and Forresters' (NZHA, University of Otago, 2003); Terry Slater, 'The Rural Economy of Nineteenth-Century Suburbia: Bourgeois Suburban Gardens and Gardening in Edgbaston, Birmingham' (ICHG, Auckland University, 2003); Valentine Cadieux, 'Memories of Market Gardens and the Ideological Transformation of Commons: Respite and Revenue in Residential Productive Land Use Around Boston and Toronto, 1865-1945' (ICHG, Auckland University, 2003)

<sup>44</sup> Katie Holmes, 'Transplanting Home: the Immigrant Garden and the Place of 'Home' (BWC, Melbourne University, 2004); Kylie Mirmohamadi, 'There will be the garden, of course': English Gardens, British Settlers, and Australia' (BWC, Melbourne University, 2004)

Urban history developed out of urban sociology. This helps explain the sociological interests of urban environmentalists, reflected in the work of urban environmental historians. Urban sociologists examined the urban environment as a discrete space within which human activity could be put under the microscope. John Porteous, in 1977, justified this approach by pointing out that the global trend was towards urbanisation, saying 'that [as] an urban lifestyle is likely to continue for some time as the foremost thrust of human evolution, it is imperative that we attempt to understand how man behaves in cities'.<sup>45</sup> In his 1978 study of late nineteenth century Melbourne, Graeme Davison showed how that city developed as a 'concrete expression of the capitalist order', but was not 'a simple case of 'bourgeois hegemony''. Capitalist ideals, he said, were self-propagated, impacting on material conditions.<sup>46</sup> He traced the linkages between the myth of 'Marvellous Melbourne' and reality in exploring how ideologies can shape urban processes.<sup>47</sup> Much the same can be said regarding the myth of Christchurch as a 'Garden City'. Manuel Castells assumed the existence of divergent agendas affecting urban change. He argued that historical change within the urban space was not generated simply by elites, but through a dialectical process in which subordinate groupings resisted and constrained agendas directed from above. '[S]pace and cities, as well as history', he said, were 'not the products of the will and interests of the dominant classes, genders, and apparatuses, but, the result of a process in which they are resisted by dominated classes, genders, and subjects, and in which they are met by alternative projects of new, emerging social actors'.<sup>48</sup> While Davison's emphasis on the *rus in urbe* ideal in Melbourne<sup>49</sup> certainly finds a parallel in Christchurch, Castells's interest in the interplay of differing agendas is equally apparent. Phillip Kivell, in an exploration of the nature of urban morphology, had likewise acknowledged the range of forces at play in the workings of the city, and quoted H. Carter in asserting 'the plan and built form of the town are direct reflections of the nature of culture on the larger scale... the town epitomises in its physical nature the complex of political, economic, and social forces which characterised the period of its creation'.<sup>50</sup> Charles Tilly, writing in 1996, was adamant that such approaches could benefit social history.<sup>51</sup> He believed that urban history would help address certain 'central historical questions' about the

<sup>45</sup> John Porteous, *Environment and Behavior: Planning and Everyday Urban Life* (British Columbia, 1977), p.10

<sup>46</sup> Graeme Davison, *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne* (Melbourne, 1978), pp.131-132

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p.15

<sup>48</sup> Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-Cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements* (London, 1983), p.314.

<sup>49</sup> Davison, *op.cit.*, p.140

<sup>50</sup> Philip Kivell, *Land and the City: Patterns and Processes of Urban Change* (London, 1993), pp.3-4, quoting H. Carter, *An Introduction to Historical Geography* (London, 1983), p.114

<sup>51</sup> Cities, he said, 'offer privileged sites for study of the interaction between large social processes and routines of social life... Much of urban history's agenda... deals implicitly or explicitly with the impact of global processes on small-scale social life or (more rarely) the impact of small-scale social life on global processes.' Charles Tilly, 'What Good is Urban History', *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 22, No.6, September 1996, pp.704-705

ways in which individual actions shape macro-scale processes and the role of technology in shaping human experience of life.<sup>52</sup> Siès argued in 2001 that '[a]ccurate understanding of cities and suburbs and how human beings interact with them requires that we investigate cultural and material realms and the links between them.'<sup>53</sup>

The overlap here with the much more recent subdiscipline of urban environmental history should be clear, yet a lack of consensus around how to do this work continues to prevail. In 2000 more than half the world's population was living in cities. The approach of this unprecedented and possibly environmentally catastrophic situation had been exercising the minds of United Nations officials for years.<sup>54</sup> Keyes, in a landmark essay of 2000, channeled some of this anxiety by stating unreservedly that doing urban environmental history would finally enable historians to answer pressing calls 'for relevance in historical inquiry'.<sup>55</sup> Yet Keyes also acknowledged that there was a limited understanding of the relationship between urban spaces and their underlying ecological structures.<sup>56</sup> Rectification of that point in urban environmental histories is essential.

While urban environmentalists have tended to focus on policy related often to the use or creation of public greenspace, some recent studies have introduced a concern with the use of privately owned greenspace within the urban and suburban environment. Robbins *et al*, in an article about the North American lawn fetish, have perhaps epitomised this new approach.<sup>57</sup> Noting the power of what they call 'moral landscapes' which exert enormous social pressures on individuals to conform to a commercially generated aesthetic, they argue that not nearly enough attention has been paid to the 'social and economic forces that structure human

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p.703

<sup>53</sup> 'Our best understanding of metropolitan complexity will come by considering together the larger forces that shape residential location decisions and urban or suburban neighbourhoods and the internal dynamics of neighborhood formation and development. That means studying metropolitan places through perspectives afforded by both the kinds of aggregate data urban geographers are gathering about metropolitan movement and urban deconcentration and the intimate knowledge of locale that derives from the case study. Coupling macro- and micro-perspectives should also help researchers generate data about cultural practices and cultural production as well as the social and economic dynamics that shape cities and suburbs... Perhaps the final research challenge involves studying the diverse range of community types that we now know has made up the North American metropolis in a way that generates comparable data and analysis.' M. Siès, 'North American Suburbs, 1880-1950: Cultural and Social Reconsiderations' *Journal of Urban History*, Vol.27, No.3, March 2001, p.320

<sup>54</sup> Unar Kirdar, *Cities Fit for People* (New York, 1997)

<sup>55</sup> J. Keyes, 'A Place of its Own', *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 26, No. 3, March 2000, p.390

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p.382

<sup>57</sup> P. Robbins *et al*, 'Lawns and Toxins: An Ecology of the City' *Cities*, Vol.18, No.6, 2001, p.378. Lewis made the same assertion, claiming, gardens were governed by a community aesthetic, which was 'very similar to community ethics and of community metaphysics – questions of good and evil, questions of truth and falsity – questions which are basic to our existence as human beings, and as members of human cultures'. Pierce Lewis, 'The Making of Vernacular Taste: The Case of *Sunset* and *Southern Living*', in John Dixon Hunt and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (eds), *The Vernacular Garden* (Washington, DC, 1993), p.108

environmental behavior and consciousness'.<sup>58</sup> The point here is that while urban environmental historians lament a lack of knowledge about ecological foundations of cities, those urban environmentalists looking at contemporary subjects are concerned that not enough attention is paid to the social, cultural and economic factors that determine, or at least suggest, what human uses of the urban environment will be. Garden studies, while not usually involved in such questions, has developed a large body of research that may readily be employed in doing so. These, discussed below, have informed the approach of the present study.

### **Garden Studies: Vernacular Gardens**

The research agendas of garden scholars have traversed an enormous area over the last fifteen years. Garden studies as a discipline has evolved as a branch of art history and has always been predominantly concerned with landscaped gardens as deliberate, artistic expressions. The placement of statuary, garden beds, water features, the use and shape of walks, and the choice of colour schemes – in other words the internal logic of these works – have been its main subjects. The kinds of gardens that have attracted the most attention from garden historians are illustrative of this: Islamic, Continental (specifically French and Italian) and British estates have all been looked at closely and analysed on the basis of their artistic merits.<sup>59</sup>

Since the early 1990s, however, some scholars have explored the functions of gardens within societies and cultures. The Dumbarton Oaks School of Garden and Landscape Studies has been prominent in this project. Areas developed by Dumbarton Oaks and associated researchers include vernacular gardening, the relationships between gardens and national identity, and, most recently, a complex delving into the cultural space occupied by gardens, using ritual theory as a tool for doing so. Ritual in Christchurch gardens, associated with the creation of aforementioned 'heterotopias', is a rich field for investigation.

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<sup>58</sup> P. Robbins, *et al*, p.371

<sup>59</sup> The scholarship on these topics is enormous. See, for example, John Brookes, *Gardens of Paradise: The History and Design of the Great Islamic Gardens* (New Amsterdam, 1987); John Dixon Hunt, *Garden and Grove: The Italian Renaissance Garden in the English Imagination: 1600-1750* (London, 1986); John Dixon Hunt, *Gardens and the Picturesque* (Cambridge, 1992); John Dixon Hunt and Peter Willis, *The Genius of the Place: The English Landscape Garden 1620-1820* (London, 1975); Elisabeth MacDougall, *Fountains, Statues, and Flowers: Studies in Italian Gardens of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Washington D.C., 1994); Elisabeth MacDougall and Richard Ettinghausen (eds), *The Islamic Garden* (Washington D.C., 1976); Elizabeth Moynihan, *Paradise as a Garden in Persia and Mughal India* (London, 1979); Attilio Petruccioli (ed.), *Gardens in the Time of the Great Muslim Empires* (Leiden, 1997); Christopher Thacker, *The Genius of Gardening: The History of Gardens in Britain and Ireland* (London, 1994)

The turn from elite gardens to vernacular gardens is a significant one, signalling an entirely new approach to the purpose of garden studies. From 1993, with the publication of the Dumbarton Oaks colloquium *The Vernacular Garden*, garden studies was effectively engaged with the work of anthropology and social history. The questions now became much richer with theory. Michel Conan, for example, in a passage reminiscent of Michel Vovelle or Ferdinand Braudel, asked ‘how garden growing and maintenance practices fit into the dynamics of everyday muddling through (the short term history) as well as the long-range history of social and cultural changes.’<sup>60</sup> The very concept of a gardening vernacular is suggestive of some structural explanation for the apparently banal activity of gardening. Consensus around what constitutes a garden made in the vernacular, and why it should be studied, seemed to be elusive. John Dixon Hunt and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn attempted to summarise the main threads of the colloquium in the following way:

[Vernacular gardens are] gardens which did not come into being as the result of the powerful intervention on a site of some wealthy patron or of some “name” designer. They are likely to be small scale, not monumental; they could also in more recent times be mass-produced, products of the garden center or of new technology like the lawn mower... Vernacular gardens might also be those where maintenance and management were privileged over making, and where aesthetics was never a primary concern. Inasmuch as the vernacular garden belongs to a specific group or subgroup that changes within as the larger society around it changes, then vernacular gardens are to be understood – even more than elite examples – as a process.<sup>61</sup>

Additionally, the determining factors for the particular layout of any one garden seemed almost too random to pinpoint. While Pierce Lewis saw gardening magazines aimed at the middle class as shaping American garden forms,<sup>62</sup> home gardeners are nevertheless likely to imagine their gardening concepts have come purely from their own creative genius. It seems clear, however, that there is a good deal of intellectual cannibalism at play as well, with ideas coming from popular literature, as pointed out by Hunt and Wolschke-Bulmahn. They cite Bernard Lassus’s work showing garden inspirations had been derived from ‘Walt Disney [and] girlie magazines’.<sup>63</sup> This contemporary French study has been matched, in a sense, by John Hammett’s 2002 Ph.D thesis ‘Gardening and Meaningful Lives’. In an ethnographic study of contemporary gardeners in Milwaukee, he concluded:

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<sup>60</sup> Michel Conan, “‘The *Hortillonnages*’: Reflection on a Vanishing Gardeners’ Culture’ in Hunt and Wolschke-Bulmahn (eds), p.51

<sup>61</sup> John Dixon Hunt and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, ‘Introduction’, in Hunt and Wolschke-Bulmahn (eds), p.3

<sup>62</sup> Pierce Lewis, pp.107-136

<sup>63</sup> Hunt and Wolschke-Bulmahn (eds), p.4

While some gardeners may dabble or experiment with garden types vividly displayed in ephemeral periodicals, I now firmly believe that avid gardeners eventually create gardens that fit *them*, that please them, if only for one summer. Their gardens may continue to incorporate elements from previous gardens, but none I observed resembled in any way a garden type popularized by gardening magazines.<sup>64</sup>

This finding, though derived from a small sample of seventeen gardens, should serve as a warning to garden historians about the dangers of relying on gardening guides as a chief source. It should also serve as a warning to those seeking to draw a direct relationship between the ideas generated at Kew Gardens, for example, and their implementation in the colonies.

Precisely this type of problem appeared in Roma Hodgkinson's Ph.D. thesis on Adelaide's home gardens for the period 1836 to 1920.<sup>65</sup> This study, completed in 1995, is the closest in subject to the current thesis. Its approach is, however, quite different, as are its findings. Of the four important findings, the first is that the first colonists were never especially interested in producing their own fruit and vegetables, as markets had already been well established in the other colonies by the time of Adelaide's settlement. There was no need to use gardens for self-sufficiency.<sup>66</sup> The second major finding was that the average size of suburban blocks of land increased over the period. This was driven by the impetus for improvement in social standing: 'It was this perception that ownership of a house and a substantial tract of land indicated equality with the middle classes that, more than any other factor, motivated the acquisition of large blocks of land'.<sup>67</sup> Third, during this period the decorative front garden steadily increased in size as the working and lower middle classes emulated their social superiors and ideas about beauty imported from Britain.<sup>68</sup> These ideas, Hodgkinson argues, were variations of the 'Gardenesque' mode advocated by John Claudius Loudon. That this occurred, she contends, is 'indicative of the extent to which middle class ideas and values had been absorbed by the working class of Adelaide.'<sup>69</sup>

A fourth important idea, explored at some length, is that the means by which these ideas were communicated was a combination of 'external groups and organisations, such as nurseryment [sic] and seedsmen, horticultural and floricultural societies (and the shows they organised),

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<sup>64</sup> John Hammetter, 'Gardening and Meaningful Lives: An Ethnography of Milwaukee-area Residential Vernacular Gardens' (Ph.D., Northwestern University, 2002), pp.130-131

<sup>65</sup> Roma Hodgkinson, 'The Adelaide Suburban Garden, 1836-1920: A Social and Economic Analysis' (Ph.D., Flinders University of South Australia, 1995)

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p.99

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p.178

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p.181

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p.250

the Botanic and municipal gardens, and the journals and newspapers.’<sup>70</sup> Unlike Hammett, therefore, Hodgkinson’s findings for Adelaide showed the ability of particular advocates to shape private gardening practice. Indeed, she goes as far as to say that ‘[t]he overwhelming concentration on decorative gardens, and the negligible coverage of vegetable and fruit growing, in these books provides the clearest possible evidence of the direction which home gardening was taking.’<sup>71</sup> The books, however, were nowhere near as influential as the newspapers, which reflected the same trend. Kitchen garden references virtually disappeared in the *Observer* between 1880 and 1885, while the decorative garden was always covered extensively.<sup>72</sup> Garden plans and photographs are employed to pictorially demonstrate the same points, but Hammett’s warning still requires consideration. While not disputing the findings for Adelaide, which indeed provide a striking contrast with the Christchurch case, I would nevertheless argue that written texts do not necessarily influence behaviour, rather they vie for attention with a range of other influences, many of which are extremely powerful and include personal experience and especially the activities of parents.

Andrea Gaynor’s 2006 book, *Harvest of the Suburbs: An Environmental History of Growing Food in Australian Cities*,<sup>73</sup> focuses attention not only on the vernacular gardens of Australian suburbanites, but particularly on their food producing potentials and meanings. She argues that home food production (including the keeping of poultry and other livestock) was in Australia closely tied to ideas of masculine independence contrasted against feminine dependence. The book, which dwells mostly on experiences in Perth and Melbourne, and covers the period 1880 to 2000, attempts a contribution to the field of environmental history, but, while stating some useful generalisations about likely effects of various practices, does not manage to measure actual environmental impact in any particular locality. The key finding, that home food production has historically been an important dimension of the Australian suburban experience, and that the idea of ‘independence’ has underpinned this particular use of land, diverges from Hodgkinson’s findings for Adelaide in an important but unexplained sense, and finds strong resonance with the present thesis about Christchurch.

The sociological and anthropological approaches of these scholars hint at the complexities that lie behind particular gardening choices. At one level, they appear structured by certain immediate social and cultural forces. Conan’s essay on the *Hortillanages* is a case in point,

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p.250

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., pp.306-7

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p.303

<sup>73</sup> Andrea Gaynor, *Harvest of the Suburbs: An Environmental History of Growing Food in Australian Cities* (Crawley, Western Australia, 2006). Note: the present researcher could not obtain the Ph.D. thesis this book was based on via interloan.

where the sudden erosion of a remarkably long-standing gardening system is entirely to do with external economic forces. On a different tangent, Catherine Benoît's work on Creole gardens in Guadeloupe shows how religious beliefs may determine gardening choices.<sup>74</sup> Such gardening traditions are reinforced internally, and are possibly challenged externally. At another level, however, it seems that the suburban gardens of industrialised countries are just as likely to be influenced by what the neighbours are doing, as by gardening guides, personal experience, and other apparently random factors. If historians of the imperial periphery have started to look to gardens as an important aspect of colonisation, these complexities need to be considered and examined.

### **Garden Studies: Gardens and Identity**

The second strand developing within garden studies generally has been to do with the relationship between gardens and national identity. Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn and Gert Gröning have both contributed to this discussion in important ways, primarily focussing on the ideological uses to which certain landscaping choices can be put. Their interest has centred chiefly on the use of native plantings by the National Socialist government in Germany, and in doing so have triggered considerable international debate.<sup>75</sup> Less controversially, Anne Helmreich's 2002 book *The English Garden and National Identity: The Competing Styles of Garden Design, 1873-1914*, discussed rivalry between 'wilderness' and 'formal' garden styles. She argued that the competition was triggered by an attempt to capture an essentially English identity during a period of rapid imperial expansion, where what was 'English' seemed in danger of being lost. Helmreich's work leaves hanging the question 'what happened to the garden when it travelled out into Empire. Did it produce there a notion

<sup>74</sup> Catherine Benoît, 'African Guadeloupean Dooryard Gardens and Lay Rituals in Postcolonial Guadeloupe', (Symposium on Lay Ritual Practices in Gardens and Landscapes, Dumbarton Oaks, 2003)

<sup>75</sup> For an outline of this debate, see Wolschke-Bulmahn, 'The Search for 'Ecological Goodness' among Garden Historians', in Michel Conan (ed.), *Perspectives on Garden Histories* (Washington, DC, 1999), pp. 161-180. Wolschke-Bulmahn says that in 'the United States the discussion of this specific ideological dimension of ideas about ecology and natural landscape design started in the early 1990s; Gert Gröning and I discussed related issues in several publications. Knowledge of German garden history, including the interdependence between National Socialism and the rise of concepts of natural garden and landscape design and their political function for National Socialist politics, made it easier to address such issues.' p.176. The debate was opened in 1983 in Gert Gröning and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, 'Naturschutz und Ökologie im Nationalsozialismus,' *Die alte Stadt*, Vol. 10, No.1, 1983, pp.1-17. In 1992 Wolschke-Bulmahn followed this idea up with an article attempting to draw links between Rudolf Steiner's biodynamic gardening and the Nazi government, in his 'Landscape Architecture, Biodynamic Farming and Gardening, and National Socialism'. Thanks to Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn for sending me a copy of the unpublished English version of this article. For the other side of the argument Wolschke-Bulmahn cites, among others, Kim Sorvig, 'Natives and Nazis: An Imaginary Conspiracy in Ecological Design. Commentary on G. Gröning and J. Wolschke-Bulmahn's 'Some Notes on the Mania for Native Plants in Germany,' *Landscape Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1994, p.58.



of homeland that both paradoxically denied and acknowledged the presence of Empire?’<sup>76</sup> Katie Holmes had in fact already anticipated Helmreich’s question. ‘“I have built up a little garden’: The Vernacular Garden, National Identity and a Sense of Place’,<sup>77</sup> used the wartime letters of Winnifred Stephenson to her husband to investigate a range of issues related to Australian identity as expressed through her activities in their garden. Noting that Australia’s cultural historians have paid little attention to the garden as an expression of identity,<sup>78</sup> she argued that

through gardens the British could create an image of and in their own making. They were crucial to the ways in which Europeans transformed unfamiliar landscapes and invested them with European traditions and expectations. Gardens were crucial to the establishment of a sense of place.<sup>79</sup>

Most importantly, Holmes highlighted the power relations inherent in garden making, especially within the colonial space.

Established gardens speak of a history, a present and a future. They speak of a sense of place. They also speak of power: of colonization, of permanence, of control. They are a place where individual and cultural imaginings are planted, nurtured and take root, transforming the landscape and changing its meanings and metaphors.<sup>80</sup>

Likewise, Paul Fox wrote in *Clearings* that in making colonial gardens, land needed to be cleared, ‘to erase what existed in nature in order to write a new narrative. Nurseries and botanic gardens offered ideal landscapes by which colonists could glimpse what their settlements might eventually become.’<sup>81</sup> Therefore, the ‘colonial landscape was always a contested site.’<sup>82</sup> Holmes’s linking of gardens with identity, and particularly with identity within an imperial context builds upon her earlier work focused specifically on women’s spaces, of which the home garden might be one.<sup>83</sup> More recently, Holmes has written about the ways in which gardens act as an intersection between individual and cultural understandings of landscape.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Anne Helmreich, *The English Garden and National Identity: The Competing Styles of Garden Design, 1873-1914* (Cambridge, 2002), p.232

<sup>77</sup> Katie Holmes, ‘“I have built up a little garden’: The Vernacular Garden, National Identity and a Sense of Place’, *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes*, Vol.21, No.2, 2001, pp.115-121

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p.115

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p.119

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p.120

<sup>81</sup> Paul Fox, *Clearings: Six Colonial Gardeners and their Landscapes* (Melbourne, 2004), p.xv

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xvi

<sup>83</sup> Katie Holmes, *Spaces in Her Day: Australian Women’s Diaries of the 1920s and 1930s* (St Leonards, NSW, 1995), pp.54-60

<sup>84</sup> Katie Holmes, ‘“In spite of it all, the garden still stands’: Gardens, Landscape and Cultural History’, in Hsu-Ming Teo and Richard White (eds), *Cultural History in Australia*, pp.172-185

On New Zealand, Helen Leach postulated a dual process in which the natural landscape has been excluded from home gardens, and native plants have been used only where they seem to have an unnatural, 'exotic' look about them.<sup>85</sup> In making this statement she consciously followed Michael Pollan and Geoffrey Dutton<sup>86</sup> who have argued that native gardens should be viewed not as part of a continuum of naturalness, but rather as carefully constructed, highly unnatural spaces. This thesis looks more closely at the use of native plants in gardens and their meaning regarding identity. Thelma Strongman stated that from the Edwardian period '[a] 'native section' appeared in many Christchurch gardens where, although the plants were grown informally within it, they were usually kept formally separate from the exotic plants.'<sup>87</sup> That is, the native garden was a domesticated wilderness. Helen Leach made a similar observation, noting that garden expert David Tannock claimed in 1934 that 'a native section is now an accepted feature of most large gardens.'<sup>88</sup> He had remarked twenty years earlier, in the first edition of his book, that gardeners had started to notice native plants.<sup>89</sup> After this period, Leach noted a decline in use of natives. By way of contrast, Paul Walker stated that between 1940 and 1960 one aspect of gardening in New Zealand that changed was an *increasing* interest in natives, although this is scarcely substantiated.<sup>90</sup>

Aside from these 'sections', ferneries and rockeries also displayed native plants during this period. Leach argued that the New Zealand fernery was copied from Britain, where such garden structures had been popular since the 1850s.<sup>91</sup> There seems little disagreement over this. Strongman and Leach disagreed as to the constitution of the rockery, however, with the former claiming its chief importance was as a place to feature newly discovered plants from the Southern Alps,<sup>92</sup> and the latter stating that rockeries 'were usually planted with alpine species from the northern hemisphere'.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, Leach suggested, in her conclusion, that native plants were only accommodated in any part of the garden where they would satisfy a

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<sup>85</sup> Leach, 'Exotic Natives and Contrived Wild Gardens', pp.214-229

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p.229. Interestingly, Wolschke-Bulmahn notes that Michael Pollan has also entered into the debate about the ideological implications of natural landscape design. See Pollan, 'Against Nativism', *New York Times Magazine*, May 15 1994, pp.52-55, cited in Wolschke-Bulmahn 'Ecological Goodness', p.178. Pollan's article provoked what Wolschke-Bulmahn called 'highly emotional attacks'.

<sup>87</sup> Thelma Strongman, *The Gardens of Canterbury: A History* (Wellington, 1984), p.143

<sup>88</sup> David Tannock, *Practical Gardening*, p.131, quoted in Leach, 'Exotic Natives', p.222

<sup>89</sup> David Tannock, *Manual of Gardening in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1914), p.132

<sup>90</sup> Paul Walker, 'Towards the Modern Garden', in Matthew Bradbury (ed.), *A History of the Garden in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1995), p.169

<sup>91</sup> Leach, 'Exotic Natives', p.217

<sup>92</sup> Strongman, p.144

<sup>93</sup> Leach, 'Exotic Natives', p.227

‘popular taste for colour in flowers or foliage’,<sup>94</sup> essentially being slotted into a garden style that had been created in Britain.

This apparently minor debate is illustrative of a prevailing uncertainty about the meanings native plants had when used in New Zealand gardens, or more broadly the Pakeha relationship with the New Zealand environment. The ‘antipodean perception’ helps make sense of this, where ambivalence is recognised as an actual condition of our history: with ‘peoples in motion, histories traversing distance, and ‘identities’... as never quite at home.’<sup>95</sup> For Peter Beilharz, whose antipodean reading was expressly Australian, the idea meant to ‘be other, displaced, a reflex of metropolitan culture, and yet part of it, elsewhere’,<sup>96</sup> while existing in a particular relationship with Europe. This is not presented in this thesis as a variant ‘hybridity’: ‘antipodean’ refers to duality, to the holding together of at least two distinct ideas in an uncomfortable relationship. Hybridity implies fusion, and as such seems a strange word for someone such as Homi Bhabha to use when describing ‘the otherness of the Self inscribed in the perverse palimpsest of colonial identity’.<sup>97</sup> Colonial identity may well be a perverse palimpsest, but the perversity comes from the fact that opposing ideas are not yet hybridized. Nor is it suggested here that the use of native plants represented the domination of an indigenous landscape. Their presence posed a problem of identity explored more fully in Chapter Four.

### **Garden Studies: Ritual**

The final strand of garden studies work worth commenting on here is the attempt to assert the cultural significance of gardens, to assign and explain the functions of gardens within cultures, to give them some agency, to demonstrate how they may contribute to cultural continuity and change. In 1996, Ian Hoskings, in his Ph.D. thesis ‘Cultivating the Citizen: Cultural Politics in the Parks and Gardens of Sydney, 1880-1930’, noted that ‘it was in and around what might be termed green space that many of the practices and discourses of democracy and civicism involving ritual, protest, regulation and urban reform were enacted and given voice.’<sup>98</sup> He devoted a chapter to an exploration of the uses and meanings of civic ritual in public parks, noting the existence of contestation.<sup>99</sup> Later, private gardens, particularly those of the working classes, became sites targeted for identity building, and

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<sup>94</sup> Leach, ‘Exotic Natives’, p.227

<sup>95</sup> John Pocock, *The Discovery of Islands* (Cambridge, 2005), p.23

<sup>96</sup> Peter Beilharz, *Imagining the Antipodes* (Cambridge, 1997), p.97

<sup>97</sup> Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London, 1994), p.44

<sup>98</sup> Ian Hoskings, ‘Cultivating the Citizen: Cultural Politics in the Parks and Gardens of Sydney, 1880-1930 (Ph.D., University of Sydney, 1996), p.2

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., pp.135-173

especially the inculcation of ideals of respectability.<sup>100</sup> Garden competitions were one dimension of this.<sup>101</sup> Green space therefore carried meanings that could be accessed through ritual. In a similar sense Craig Clunas remarked the same year in his book *Fruitful Sites*, that elite gardens in Ming Dynasty China were ciphers for the complexities of Ming culture, and argued that in fact they were over-determined 'sites of negotiation and dissonance'.<sup>102</sup> Clunas was saying more than that cultural processes of negotiation and dissonance took place in these sites; the gardens themselves somehow embodied these cultural forces. Here one can see an earlier mentioned problem of environmental and cultural history reappearing, namely the nature/ culture dichotomy. John Dixon Hunt, noting Clunas's work in a Dumbarton Oaks colloquium designed to take stock of the changing nature of garden studies, seemed frustrated by the elusive nature of this central historical problem. 'The garden', he said, 'is unique among the arts in involving living organic materials; it thereby offers historians the opportunity to track the role of both nature and culture, a prime dualism in the human condition itself that is mirrored by the gardens that men and women create...'<sup>103</sup>. Still, an adequate theoretical perspective from which to appraise this special role of the garden as a mediator of nature and culture seemed distant.

More recently, garden studies explicitly appropriated certain aspects of ritual theory to explore the awkward and intangible terrain of culture. The premise behind this move rested partly on the assumption that ritual is in some way a nexus of cultural forces, both their result and a prime factor in their change over time. It also rested on a linkage between this cultural space, and the physical space within which ritual takes place. Gardens that are created for this ritual use, or which somehow attract such uses to them, have therefore been examined with this in mind. Two symposia held by Dumbarton Oaks in 2002 and 2003 dealt first with the 'garden' rituals of institutional religions and then with lay ritual practices in such settings. It is the material presented at the second of these symposia with which the remainder of this discussion of garden studies scholarship is primarily concerned.

The better of the presentations proceeded from a strong empirical basis before attempting to draw any theoretical conclusions. Indeed, such conclusions were not always drawn. Nevertheless, the papers introduced the ideas of key thinkers on the function and effects of ritual, which need to be touched on here. For Durkheim, the role of ritual was essentially to

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., pp.241, 263-264, 281

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 283

<sup>102</sup> Craig Clunas, *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (Durham, 1996), p.207

<sup>103</sup> John Dixon Hunt, 'Approaches (New and Old) to Garden History', in Michel Conan (ed.), *Perspectives on Garden Histories* (Washington, D.C, 1999), p.90

contribute to the maintenance of the status quo.<sup>104</sup> Turner and Geertz, on the other hand, believed that in ritual could be seen the mechanism by which longstanding cultural ideas can enter a dialogue with social realities, a dialogue capable of generating historical change. For Geertz, according to Catherine Bell, 'ritual enables a group's ethos and worldview – that is, their attitudes and their general concepts of the world order (their experiences and their ideals) – to temper and nuance each other.'<sup>105</sup> Marshall Sahlins also explored ritual in this way. For him, 'ritual enables enduring patterns of social organization and cultural symbolic systems to be brought to bear on real events; in the course of this process, real situations are assessed and negotiated in ways that can transform these traditional patterns or structures in turn.'<sup>106</sup> The positioning of ritual in such a schema is certainly provocative.

Bell argued that ritual is more a show of solidarity than a true expression of it. In this Bell questioned the hegemonic powers of ritual ascribed to it by earlier theorists. However, she emphasised the agency of participants in rituals, who 'consent to participation by a variety of internal discriminations about one's relation to what is going on'.<sup>107</sup> Such participants bring with them 'a self-constituting history that is a patchwork of compliance, resistance, [and] misunderstanding'.<sup>108</sup> There is, nevertheless, also a certain 'redemptive personal appropriation of the hegemonic order'.<sup>109</sup> While ritualisation cannot, by itself, create community, it can 'take arbitrary or necessary common interests and ground them in an understanding of the hegemonic order; it can empower agents in limited and highly negotiated ways'.<sup>110</sup> Thus for Bell ritual seemed awkwardly to assert the power of a hegemonic order, whose hegemony is circumscribed – to a limited extent, to be sure, but still circumscribed – by the very nature of the different aspirations of its participants. Whether a hegemonic order can really be talked about using this sort of definition must remain open to debate, but the point that in ritual different interests might find common ground anchored within a dominant culture is a good one.

The ahistorical Durkheimian notion of ritual appeared generally less favoured by garden scholars – especially Conan – than those of Turner and Geertz who saw ritual in part accounting for historical change. This is unsurprising as Conan's interest in the role of

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<sup>104</sup> See Dominick LaCapra, *Emile Durkheim: Sociologist and Philosopher* (Ithaca, 1972), p.284

<sup>105</sup> Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York, 1997), p.67

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p.77

<sup>107</sup> Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York, 1992), p.207

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p.208

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p.208

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p.222

gardens in social and cultural change had been longstanding.<sup>111</sup> In his summation of the 2003 Dumbarton Oaks symposium, he argued that ‘Spaces of ritualized garden practice embody cultural propensities... [S]uch propensities may contribute either to the reproduction of the social order, and of shared cultural beliefs; or may, in different circumstances, be conducive to cultural change.’<sup>112</sup> In making this assertion, the notion of ‘emplacement’ particularly inspired Conan. In one sense, this was a return to Clunas’s earlier reading of the late Ming garden as ‘a site of contested meanings’<sup>113</sup> anchored within material culture.<sup>114</sup> Benoît had further developed such an approach during the symposium, arguing that the ‘Caribbean dooryard garden is what Michel Foucault, in developing a phenomenological approach to the outside space as opposed to the internal space, called a heterogeneous place laden with qualities and not a homogeneous and empty place’.<sup>115</sup>

Foucault’s ‘heterotopia’ informed Benoît and Conan, and possibly Clunas. It was also the central idea behind Robert Rotenberg’s 1995 study of Viennese gardens, *Landscape and Power in Vienna*.<sup>116</sup> Based on a lecture given in 1967, Foucault’s article ‘Different Spaces’ revealed his fascination with spatial history, as well as what he termed the nineteenth century desacralisation of time. Space, he believed, retained its sacral qualities, characterised by

oppositions that cannot be tampered with... oppositions we take for granted, for example, between private space and public space, between the family space and social space, between cultural space and useful space... [We] are living not in a homogeneous and empty space but, on the contrary, in a space that is laden with qualities, a space that may also be haunted by fantasy.<sup>117</sup>

Heterogeneous space, in which we live, he said, is ‘an ensemble of relations that define emplacements that are irreducible to each other and absolutely nonsuperposable.’<sup>118</sup> In particular, he sought to focus on those emplacements ‘that have the curious property of being connected to all the other emplacements, but in such a way that they suspend, neutralize, or

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<sup>111</sup> ‘We should reach... for an understanding of gardening as a creative process that contributes to cultural and historical change and is constrained in its practice and in its development by the existing cultural orders... We are interested... in registering all actions that may introduce new elements or meanings in gardening or new experiences in gardens in order to understand their conditions of existence and to account for their impact on social and cultural change.’ Michel Conan, ‘From Vernacular Gardening to a Social Anthropology of Gardening’, in Conan (ed.), *Perspectives on Garden Histories*, (Washington D.C., 1999), pp.202-204

<sup>112</sup> Conan, ‘Closing Remarks’ (Symposium on Lay Ritual Practices in Gardens and Landscapes, Dumbarton Oaks, 2003), p.6

<sup>113</sup> Clunas, p.102

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13

<sup>115</sup> Benoît, *op.cit.*, p.9

<sup>116</sup> Robert Rotenberg, *Landscape and Power in Vienna* (Baltimore, 1995), especially pp.15-16

<sup>117</sup> Michel Foucault, ‘Different Spaces’, in James D. Faubion (ed.) *Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984, Vol.1 12: Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology* (New York, 1998), p.177

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p.178

reverse the set of relations that are designated, reflected, or represented... by them.’ Of these, Foucault identified two varieties. The first were utopias, imagined places. The second were ‘actual places, places that are designed into the very institution of society, which are sorts of actually realized utopias’. In these, ‘all the other real emplacements that can be found within the culture are, at the same time, represented, contested, and reversed...’ These were his ‘heterotopias’, different places, ‘because they are utterly different from all the emplacements they reflect or refer to...’<sup>119</sup> Proposing a field of inquiry dubbed ‘heterotopology’, Foucault extrapolated a number of heterotopic qualities. For garden studies, it is his notion that the heterotopia can juxtapose ‘in a single real place several emplacements that are incompatible in themselves’ that is most compelling, because of these, his prime example is the garden:

One should bear in mind that in the East the garden, an amazing creation now thousands of years old, was deeply symbolic, with meanings that were superimposed, as it were. The traditional garden of the Persians was a sacred space that is said to have joined together within its rectangle four parts representing the four parts of the world, with a space even more sacred than the others which was like the umbilicus, the navel of the world at its center (this was the location of the basin and the fountain); and all the garden’s vegetation was supposed to be distributed within that space, within that figurative microcosm... The garden is the smallest parcel of the world and the whole world at the same time. Since early antiquity the garden has been a sort of blissful and universalizing heterotopia...<sup>120</sup>

This understanding of space is central to this thesis, which demonstrates that the history of gardens in Christchurch necessarily involves heterotopic gardens and their relationships with other gardens. As demonstrated in Chapter Three, garden competitions sought to make heterotopic ‘paragon’ gardens, on which the city’s identity was ultimately hung. Chapter Five argues that an alternative agenda sought to capture alternative emplacements, though with limited success. This competition was a material expression of the kind of competition Castells identified.

In the same vein, the more recent work from Dumbarton Oaks demonstrated how a focus on ritual within gardens could help unpack the process by which any of these many qualities might be deployed. Studies of ritual activities in Californian Japanese gardens, by *novellistes* in eighteenth century Paris, and kitchen gardeners in Victorian Britain, demonstrated ‘the appropriation of emplacements by newcomers who develop there a new sense of perception, a new mode of agency, and a new temporality, and thus may achieve over time a sense of group identity.’<sup>121</sup> Here a glimmer of hope in further understanding the ways gardens may

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., p.178

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., pp.181-182

<sup>121</sup> Conan, ‘Closing Remarks’, p.7

contribute to a sense of identity, along with a weaving together of both nature and culture, seemed possible.

Catherine Benoît's paper, 'African Guadeloupean Dooryard Gardens and Lay Rituals in Post-colonial Guadeloupe', synthesised many of the themes explored in this literature overview so far. Postcoloniality, vernacular gardens and ritualisation were woven together in a strong example of ethnography revealing the construction of identity through garden practices, in a way inaccessible through official versions.<sup>122</sup> Benoît employed Catherine Bell's definition of ritual as 'a set of activities that construct particular types of meanings and values in specific ways', stressing 'the primacy of the body moving about within a specially constructed space, simultaneously defining (imposing) and experiencing (receiving) the values ordering the environment'.<sup>123</sup> The garden acted as a site where 'some of the fundamentals of culture are acquired during adulthood. Acquisition of culture is both a time-and-space based initiation.'<sup>124</sup> Importantly, Benoît extended thinking about gardening by suggesting that not only are gardens places 'where worldviews can be read, but as places that create people. Through gardening rituals, people and gardens are in constant interaction for the construction of the self and society.'<sup>125</sup> In this way, the use of ritual by various social groupings to construct or maintain an identity linked directly to a particular place – in this case to vernacular gardens – demonstrates the value of attention to garden ritual within a postcolonial framework. There is no point attempting to suggest that in every society that has been part of an imperial system, garden rituals will be worth examining. However, where gardens have been linked to identity – as Holmes has done in an Australian context, and as seems almost certainly to be the case for Christchurch, the 'Garden City' – the role of ritual in building this identity proves worthy of exploration.

### **The New Zealand Garden in History**

There is a consensus among New Zealand historians that the 'quarter-acre' section with its garden is a crucial site for the development of New Zealand identity. In spite of this no in-

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<sup>122</sup> While it has become fashionable for institutions in Guadeloupe to make 'Creole' gardens – defined as polycultural 'hodgepodes' – in a supposedly decolonising context, Benoît shows that in fact authentic African Guadeloupean gardens follow a particular format informed by religious sensibilities and beliefs about the supernatural functions of various plants. The gardens act as another 'shell' or series of shells, like the house, amulets, and the skin, around the self. Through mapping a number of these gardens and informal discussions, Benoît noted significant correlations – certain plants always found at the most vulnerable points of the house, for example – which could never be talked about with the makers of the gardens themselves, as speaking about these protections undermined their function.

<sup>123</sup> Bell, quoted in Benoît, *op.cit.*, p.11

<sup>124</sup> Benoît, *op.cit.*, p.13

<sup>125</sup> Benoît, *op.cit.*, p.16



depth study of the New Zealand home garden has been undertaken, a serious gap which this thesis, at least in part, fills. The suburban home garden is a quintessentially New Zealand feature, just as is the country's diverse landscape. Belonging to both defines the New Zealander. Writing about the country as it was in the 1970s, Keith Sinclair noted:

... more than almost anywhere else, the towns were not *urbs* but suburbs. In their towns the New Zealanders had managed to retain many rural advantages. The quarter-acre 'section', once ubiquitous, was shrinking by 1970, but nevertheless most houses had sections large enough to contain fruit trees, flower and vegetable gardens, and lawn. Within the growing cities there could still be found many features of a simpler life. Life in New Zealand was still largely lived out-of-doors. Almost everyone lived near the sea, or mountains, or the bush, perhaps all three. A temperate climate encouraged the people to take advantage of what nature so generously offers.<sup>126</sup>

James Belich, too, noted the special characteristics of the New Zealand garden. 'The plot of land, or 'section', traditionally extended to a quarter-acre, or 1,000 square metres. Overseas visitors are still struck by the persistence of these large sections and detached houses, even in large cities and poorer suburbs.' The garden itself was, according to Belich, fairly generic: 'The front garden and its path to the door were kept neat; growing fruit and vegetables and other economic activities took place in the back garden, though grass was the predominant plant.'<sup>127</sup> Indeed for Belich, the garden was a place to demonstrate social conformity, as Christine Dann has found for Christchurch.<sup>128</sup>

Miles Fairburn, in 1975, took quite a different approach, seeing the New Zealand suburb as artificially replicating an imagined rural arcadia in conscious juxtaposition to the artificial urban environment. The suburb was an 'arcadia of the middleclass sentimental family', developed to 'create the home as a sanctuary in nature, a haven for women and children from the forces of the festering city slum and the cold-hearted regimen of an over-rationalistic capitalist system.'<sup>129</sup> Suburbia, he said, was also a tool of social engineers set on creating garden suburbs in the 1920s for the 'inner city underprivileged' who would thus be 'regenerated.'<sup>130</sup> Extending the 'middle class suburban lifestyle to the worker fitted the New

<sup>126</sup> Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2000 ed.), p.313

<sup>127</sup> James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000* (Auckland, 2001), p.348

<sup>128</sup> Christine Dann, 'Sweet William and Sticky Nellie', *Women's Studies International Forum*, Vol.15., No.2, 1992, pp.244-246

<sup>129</sup> Miles Fairburn, 'The Rural Myth and the New Urban Frontier', *New Zealand Journal of History*, Vol. 9, 1975, p.6; see also Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2003), p.269

<sup>130</sup> Fairburn, 'Rural Myth', p.16

Zealand intellectual tradition since the worker had already been mentally projected into suburbia.<sup>131</sup> The same process had been occurring in Christchurch since the 1860s.

Drawing to a certain extent on Fairburn, Donald Denoon and Philippa Mein Smith highlighted the importance of towns as signifiers of ‘development, civilization and taming the wilderness’ in the early colonial period. The suburban ideal brought by British migrants, they said,

was accessible only to a few at home. Migrant ambitions for a plot of land, space, privacy and independence could be realized in the city more readily than on the land, with the help of higher incomes for artisans, cheap public transport and small houses on their own allotments. It is no accident that Australian and New Zealand capital cities, born urban, quickly grew suburban, or that the English country cottage became the model for the suburban house in Australia and New Zealand. Arcadia would prevail in the city, if not in the bush.<sup>132</sup>

This Australasian ‘urban frontier’ was ‘crucial to identity’ and part of an early globalisation.<sup>133</sup>

Denoon and Mein Smith engaged with Fairburn in an even more pertinent sense when explaining the relationship between land, colonial aspirations for independence and the idea of the garden in the British imagination:

Given opportunities for landed independence by nature’s bounty and their own industry, this farming stock would fulfil Everyman’s – and his Woman’s – dream by transforming Australasia into gardens. There could be no more powerful symbol of colonizing the earth than a garden, grown from imported stock and seed. This could be a small farm (an agricultural garden) or a suburban lot, expressing domesticity in geographic terms; and equal opportunity, or fairness.<sup>134</sup>

Denoon and Mein Smith noted that behind this imperative of nineteenth century Pakeha New Zealand Fairburn discerned an individualism ‘resonating in a political emphasis on self-reliance’.<sup>135</sup> Indeed Fairburn’s 1989 book *The Ideal Society and its Enemies* remains the most useful of New Zealand histories for those hoping to locate the place of the home garden in nineteenth century New Zealand life. It has, however, not been adequately utilized by such scholars, and this has caused a distortion in the literature.

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p.17

<sup>132</sup> Donald Denoon and Philippa Mein Smith, *A History of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific* (Oxford, 2000), p.89; on the same topic see also Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, p.155

<sup>133</sup> Denoon and Mein Smith, p.89

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., p.135

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p.135

Fairburn sets out two roles for the garden: as a means for self-reliance or income substitution – a ‘substitute welfare state’<sup>136</sup> – on the one hand, and for establishing nostalgic connections in a context of social atomisation on the other.<sup>137</sup> For Fairburn, the first is inherently a male use, crucial in the support of a ‘labourer’s paradise’ ethos in which men actively engaged with the natural abundance of an imagined Arcadia.<sup>138</sup> Indeed, Fairburn argued that so important was home production of food that the lack of leisure time created by this work must have contributed to the weakness of social bonds, by limiting association.<sup>139</sup> The second use was especially important for lonely women whose husbands might be away for considerable lengths of time. Undue emphasis has been placed on the latter, especially by Rupert Tipples, at the expense of the former.<sup>140</sup> To be fair, however, the relationship between nostalgic feelings for Home and flower gardening for women is reinforced in the collection ‘*My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates*’.<sup>141</sup> Fairburn’s primary argument about the garden, however, is that it reduced worker insecurity and helped working men gain an independency.<sup>142</sup>

The literature specifically dealing with New Zealand home gardens has engaged with a number of these themes. The role of garden making in asserting the production of colonial (British) space and appropriation of indigenous space, gendering of the garden, and gardening as an act of social conformity are major features of this literature. Perhaps the most important feature of the literature is the Englishness of the New Zealand garden. Christine Dann noted, circumspectly, that ‘New Zealand was colonised by a great gardening nation, and most (but not all) of our gardening styles and practices are derived from English traditions.’<sup>143</sup> Thelma Strongman, concentrating on Canterbury, wrote that the ‘idea of the garden as a fine art was part of the English culture which was imported into and impressed upon the new province... When prosperity came to the province, they attempted to reproduce some of their English gardening culture.’<sup>144</sup> Michele Hider, in her study of Christchurch gardens, wrote that ‘...

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<sup>136</sup> Miles Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies* (Auckland, 1989), pp.47, 100

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.200, 202

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, p.59

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, p.187

<sup>140</sup> Rupert Tipples, *Colonial Landscape Gardener: Alfred Buxton of Christchurch, New Zealand, 1872-1950* (Lincoln, 1989), pp.4, 133

<sup>141</sup> For example, Elizabeth Peryman wrote, in 1871, ‘I expect your violets and ours will be flowering together this year... I have planted and sowed some on our bank – the little treasures never seem to look so sweet against the black earth in the garden as against the grass and weeds. I often think what a source of pleasure the old violet banks and primrose woods and cowslip fields were to us. Our children have not these treats.’ Francis Porter and Charlotte MacDonald (eds), ‘*My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates*’: *The Unsettled Lives of Women in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand as Revealed to Sisters, Family and Friends* (Auckland, 1996), p.99

<sup>142</sup> Fairburn, *Ideal Society*, p.101

<sup>143</sup> Christine Dann, *Cottage Gardening in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1990), p.7

<sup>144</sup> Strongman, p.11

Christchurch's early settlers set out to convert this land of plain and swamp into their own slice of England. They succeeded as Christchurch is often said to be more English than England.<sup>145</sup> Matthew Bradbury's contribution to *A History of the Garden in New Zealand*, which he edited, gave an account of landscaping styles in Britain and America from the seventeenth century onwards, the intention being to highlight the significance of these styles – although the emphasis is entirely on British gardening – to New Zealand.<sup>146</sup>

This approach is familiar to garden historians, and reflects garden history's relationship with art history. Yet Bradbury never clearly establishes how relevant seventeenth or eighteenth century English garden styles are in the New Zealand context, and while later changes in English gardening fashion clearly influence the styles of some 'cutting edge' gardens in New Zealand, for most there is more a sense of overlap and selective appropriation of parts of styles than anything else. However, the book attempts to represent the evolution of New Zealand gardens as an evolution of fashionable styles, imported directly from Britain (England) up to the mid twentieth century. This approach seemed to ignore the important contribution made by Helen Leach in her 1984 book *1,000 Years of Gardening in New Zealand*, an anthropological approach highlighting the very long-term continuity of functions of gardens as opposed to forms. While acknowledging the presence of different styles 'post-contact', she emphasised 'the production of vegetables from garden plots' over the whole period.<sup>147</sup> In 1996 Leach further developed the idea of persistence in gardens of particular elements rather than styles in 'Analysing Change in the New Zealand Home Garden – By Style or Element?'<sup>148</sup> Nevertheless, both Thelma Strongman and Rupert Tipples have employed a typology of the garden where a certain decade is exemplified by a certain garden style.<sup>149</sup> The most 'fashionable' gardens, recorded in photographs and text, are used to support this approach. Garden catalogues and especially gardening advice manuals, both very valuable, are treated as the most useful sources. Indeed, even Leach, in her recent discussion of the twentieth century home garden relied for evidence on popular gardening guides and published articles, believing it was impossible to get any closer to the choices made by gardeners on the ground.<sup>150</sup> The result was to highlight changes in the form of home gardens over the period, which again reflected a British influence. All of these histories to a large

<sup>145</sup> Michele Hider, 'Introduction', *Private Gardens of New Zealand: Christchurch* (Auckland, 1992)

<sup>146</sup> Matthew Bradbury, 'Seventeenth-, Eighteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Gardens in England and America', in Bradbury (ed.), pp.39-51

<sup>147</sup> Helen Leach, *1,000 Years of Gardening in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1984), p.2

<sup>148</sup> Helen Leach, 'Analysing Change in the New Zealand Home Garden – By Style or Element?', *The New Zealand Garden Journal*, Vol.1, No.2 (1996), pp.12-18

<sup>149</sup> Strongman; Helen Leach 'Exotic Natives'; Tipples, *Colonial Landscape Gardener*, pp. 131-142

<sup>150</sup> Leach, 'Exotic Natives', p.215

extent support Belich's general 'recolonial'<sup>151</sup> argument by focusing on the strong relationship between English and New Zealand garden styles which, it must be said, seems strongest from about the 1880s into the 1970s, with an American (Californian) influence detectable from perhaps the 1930s, but certainly from the 1950s.

Challenging this view is the presence in most of these histories of garden types that are profoundly un-English, and making an appearance at precisely the time when, according to Belich, they should not be present. Japanese or 'oriental' influences appear even in Alfred Buxton's early twentieth century creations, complete with Japanese water features, plants such as bamboo and cherries, structural features like pergolas and even Japanese lanterns. Tipples made the point that Japanese gardens had come into vogue in England at this time and were exported thence to New Zealand,<sup>152</sup> but it is surely a stretch to consider a Japanese garden as being an English import. Strongman points out that Guyon Macdonald of Orari Station, who established an impressive Japanese garden there, actually visited Japan in 1910.<sup>153</sup> Likewise, John Macmillan Brown visited Japan at about the same time and grew Japanese plants in his garden in Cashmere.<sup>154</sup> Truby King visited Japan in 1904, collecting both seeds and ideas about baby care that he later incorporated into the Plunket Society.<sup>155</sup> While King's seeds would have been propagated just out of Dunedin, the point that Japan provided both plant materials and gardening ideas for such men is significant. The relative prevalence of Japanese gardens has not yet been adequately established. Strongman suggested that contributing to the popularity of Japanese gardens in the Edwardian period were the facts that 'the geography of Japan is somewhat similar to that of New Zealand and the plentiful supply of water both in Christchurch and on the plains suited the water garden concept',<sup>156</sup> a strong acknowledgment about how environmental factors interact with fashions 'on the ground'. Chapters Three and Nine of this thesis develop this site-specific explanation further.

The use of indigenous vegetation is another sign that English gardening was not the only available form. This thesis argues against treating an early twentieth century fascination with New Zealand plants as merely a symptom of William Robinson's wild gardening fashion being imported into the colony. Indeed, it may be more realistic to see the 'wild gardening' of the late Victorian period as a response to experiences outside of England being transported there. The same can be said for the rockery, as explored in Chapter Four.

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<sup>151</sup> Belich, *Paradise Reforged*

<sup>152</sup> Tipples, *Colonial Landscape Gardener*, pp.104, 136.

<sup>153</sup> Strongman, p.56

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.158, 160

<sup>155</sup> Lloyd Chapman, *In a Strange Garden: The Life and Times of Truby King* (Auckland, 2003), p.59

<sup>156</sup> Strongman, pp.167-168

Aside from portraying the garden as a key site for the reproduction of British traditions, the literature has also begun to show something about gardens as part of an overwriting imperative, in a similar way to that discussed in the Australian context by Katie Holmes, and in the New Zealand context by Denoon and Mein Smith. Leach, Strongman, Susan Bulmer and Katherine Raine discussed Maori gardening in the pre-European and contact periods. Bulmer and Raine, in particular, describe this period as one of horticultural exchange, and highlight the commercial market gardening enterprises of Maori at this time, particularly in the North Island.<sup>157</sup> Leach went as far as to say that ‘Maori gardeners accepted a wide variety of new crops from European and Pacific Island sources, but grew them according to their own time honoured tradition. Of the two streams, European kitchen gardening seems to have been the more conservative.’<sup>158</sup> More recently, Raine has written explicitly about the role of garden making in appropriating the New Zealand landscape from Maori: ‘British settlers imposed their presence on the land through gardening; this was a major – if unexplored – way that women participated in the colonisation process...’ She continued: ‘Issues of power and control are always part of garden-making... [Gardening] was... dominance over the indigenous people whose land they occupied, exploited and transformed in appearance.’<sup>159</sup> Chapter Two of this thesis argues that this process was important in Christchurch, often thought to have been devoid of a Maori presence before settlement.

Gender has developed as an important aspect of the New Zealand garden, and the different roles of men and women in this domestic space are developed in the present study of Christchurch with this in mind. However, there are three key sub-themes present in the discussion about gender. The first is the role of women as ‘helpmeet’ in the mid nineteenth century, where women shared gardening work with men, but that there was a gendered division of labour apparent. The second, seen as a development of this pattern, is the actual gendering of space within the garden, as well as of work. The third theme is the supposedly gendered reading of the *role* of the garden in society.

Katherine Raine made the point that while a gendered division of gardening labour was prevalent in nineteenth century Britain, ‘in New Zealand, women’s responsibilities often

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<sup>157</sup> Strongman, p.21-22; Leach, *1,000 Years*; Susan Bulmer, ‘Ngā Marā: Traditional Māori Gardens’, in Bradbury (ed.), pp.17-37; Katherine Raine, ‘1815-1840s: The First European Gardens’, in Bradbury (ed.), pp.53-61

<sup>158</sup> Leach, *1,000 Years*, p.120

<sup>159</sup> Katherine Raine, ‘Domesticating the Land: Colonial Women’s Gardening’, in Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum (eds), *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History* (Auckland, 2000), p.89

expanded to cover all gardens' and not merely the flowers and herbs.<sup>160</sup> Brian Heenan and Sarah Johnsen noted a 'sharply gendered' division of labour in a Dunedin garden of the 1890s. The division, however, was between heavy and light work, and not between food and flowers. The male members of the Grimmet family, 'each usually alone', would spend long periods, clearing scrub, chopping wood, cutting hedges, fencing, digging, cleaning drains and fixing paths. By contrast, 'Rachel's visits tended to be more frequent and shorter, the tasks less onerous physically. She sowed seeds, planted out seedling cut flowers, weeded vegetables, thinned grapes and harvested vegetables...'<sup>161</sup> The letters by women of the nineteenth century contained in the collection *'My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates'*, corroborate this reading to a certain extent. Elizabeth Curtis, for example, wrote to her sister in 1862 saying 'I gathered green peas and dug new potatoes for Christmas. We can gather a bunch of flowers all the year round.'<sup>162</sup> This view differs somewhat from the model no doubt inadvertently proposed by Fairburn, previously mentioned, where men grew food and women grew flowers. But the conflict is less about whether men grew flowers than about whether women were involved in subsistence gardening in the young colony, where survival was a critical matter.<sup>163</sup>

The gendered nature of garden work has a bearing on our understanding of the increasingly gendered nature of garden space, to which Belich and others have alluded.<sup>164</sup> Christine Dann, in her classic article 'Sweet William and Sticky Nellie', argued that 'there would be few who would contradict the general observation that New Zealand suburban gardens have traditionally been divided into 'front' and 'back'', that is the female flower garden and the utilitarian male vegetable garden.<sup>165</sup> Campaigns to remove front fences, exposing women to the street, thus confined women to the home 'with a vengeance'.<sup>166</sup> Paul Walker and David Lloyd-Jenkins, following Dann, made the same observation; 'the division between the male world of the back garden and the female world of the front was still in place [in 1963]'.<sup>167</sup> For

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid., p.80

<sup>161</sup> Brian Heenan and Sarah Johnsen, 'To and From, There and Back: Gender in Spatial Mobility', in Barbara Brookes (ed.), *Sites of Gender: Women, Men & Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, p.251

<sup>162</sup> Francis Porter and Charlotte MacDonald (eds), *'My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates'* (Auckland, 1996), p.282

<sup>163</sup> Katherine Raine and John Adam convincingly set out the crucial role of settler gardens as a means for survival. See Raine and Adam, '1840-1860s: The Settlers' Gardens', in Bradbury (ed.), pp.65-81. on the same issue Christine Dann is very clear: '... many emigrants found that they were required to take a greater interest in gardening than they had back home, for reasons of sheer survival.' Dann, *Cottage Gardening in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1990), p.25

<sup>164</sup> Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, p.349

<sup>165</sup> See Christine Dann, 'Sweet William and Sticky Nellie', p.244

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., p.246

<sup>167</sup> Paul Walker and David Lloyd-Jenkins, 'Towards the Modern Garden', in Bradbury (ed.), pp.170-171; see also p.153

Dann what seems most interesting about this gendering is the almost ironically masculine interest in civic beautification, the third sub-theme above-mentioned. She argued that men representing the new dominant culture in Christchurch pressed for garden competitions that awarded those who made high-colour floral displays in their front gardens. At the same time, they attempted to vilify those who erected high fences, or else shame them into conformity.<sup>168</sup> Thus if the front garden was a female space it was their work that was under greatest public scrutiny.<sup>169</sup> The American discussion about the creation of moral landscapes is therefore in the Christchurch case also potentially to do with gendered landscapes.<sup>170</sup>

In summary, then, the New Zealand garden is considered by New Zealand historians as being an important part of New Zealand life. Garden historians have expanded such thinking by concentrating on the garden as part of the colonising process, looking at the gendered division of labour and of space in the garden, and noting the moral act of garden making as a show of social conformity. Little has been said about the ecological effects of garden making, although Katherine Raine has at least mentioned this as an important aspect of development.<sup>171</sup> A second element lacking in the literature is that it is generally very site-unspecific. Apart from scant mentions in the Caversham study, no localised studies of garden making in New Zealand have been attempted. A third element lacking concerns the use of gardens to signify a resistance to the dominant culture. Where public scrutiny demands flower gardens of a particular type, other forms of gardening are considered in this thesis in this way. And, whereas beautification became a male concern by the end of the nineteenth century, the campaign by women for more vegetable gardening to be undertaken up to the mid twentieth century adds a gendered twist to this situation. This kind of challenge could also be presented as a direct challenge to existing economic structures (Michael King's comment on the

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<sup>168</sup> Dann, 'Sweet William and Sticky Nellie', p.246

<sup>169</sup> Indeed, Dann argued that 'To judge a garden from the road is to reduce it to a one-dimensional object, a painting with superlative perspective. It is to deny that the senses of touch, smell, hearing and taste have a role to play in assessing the success of a garden. It is to do to gardens what *Playboy* does to women – present them as one dimensional 'beauties', caught at the peak of their evanescent prime for the critical scrutiny of many male eyes', 'Sweet William and Sticky Nellie', p.248

<sup>170</sup> Regarding 'moral landscapes', Lewis asserted that gardens were governed by a community aesthetic, which was 'very similar to community ethics and... community metaphysics – questions of good and evil, questions of truth and falsity – questions which are basic to our existence as human beings, and as members of human cultures.' P. Lewis, 'The Making of Vernacular Taste: The Case of *Sunset and Southern Living*', in Hunt and Wolschke-Bulmahn (eds), p.108; see also Michael Pollan, *Second Nature: A Gardener's Education* (London, 1996); 1950s American research found the social pressures involved in garden-making could be profound. In one study, a housewife, proud of her elaborate garden plans, suddenly broke down with the researcher exclaiming: 'I really hate gardening; we both do. My husband never plays golf anymore and we do nothing all weekend but work in the garden. I mean work.' See R. Meyersohn and R. Jackson, 'Gardening in Suburbia', in W. Dobriner (ed.), *The Suburban Community* (New York, 1958), p.283. Another strand of this is to do with surveillance. On the garden as a site for surveillance of nature as well as people, see Simon Pugh, *Garden-Nature-Language* (Manchester, 1988), pp.12-13

<sup>171</sup> Raine, 'The Settlers' Gardens', p.70; Raine, 'Domesticating the Land', p.90



supposedly radical nature of the Wellington Vegetable Club of the 1940s is relevant in this context<sup>172</sup>). Gardening as a form of resistance is entirely lacking from the literature, but is explored in this thesis, particularly in Chapter Five.

### **Christchurch, ‘the Garden City’**

Despite the importance of the Garden City concept to Christchurch, surprisingly little academic work has been done on it.<sup>173</sup> This is unusual because internationally there is a large literature on the history of the Garden City concept and movement, particularly in the Australian context.<sup>174</sup> This suggests either that in Christchurch the Garden City framework is so powerful that it has escaped relatively unchallenged, or else that in reality it is, outside of tourist brochures, of little concern to those living in the city. It may also be due to the contentious nature of the Garden City image in an era that sees indigenous re-vegetation projects as necessary and somehow at odds with what the Garden City is meant to represent.<sup>175</sup>

However, Rupert Tipples, Eric Pawson and Sydney Challenger have contributed to this subject. Tipples, in his 1992 article ‘Christchurch – The First Garden City?’, outlined certain key facts, including that it was supposedly Sir John Gorst who first suggested that Christchurch was a Garden City during the 1906-1907 International Exhibition at Hagley Park. ‘I feel that I have been in England all the time,’ Gorst said.

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<sup>172</sup> Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland, 2003), p.428

<sup>173</sup> Ben Schrader discussed Christchurch as a Garden City in his article about Wanganui’s Durie Hill suburb. See his ‘Garden Cities and Planning’, *New Zealand Historic Places*, No.43, 1993. Thelma Strongman and Colin Amodeo have both pointed out the importance of Christchurch’s image as a Garden City, but neither have explored the application in any depth. See Strongman, *op.cit.*, pp.139-140; Colin Amodeo, *Wilderness to Garden City: A Celebration of 150 Years of Horticultural Endeavour* (Christchurch, 2001)

<sup>174</sup> See, for example, Robert Beevers, *The Garden City Utopia : A Critical Biography of Ebenezer Howard* (London, 1988); Walter Crease, *The Search for Environment: The Garden City Before and After* (Baltimore, 1992); Robert Freestone, *Model Communities: The Garden City Movement in Australia* (Melbourne, 1989); Freestone, ‘The Australian Garden City’ in Steven Ward (ed.), *The Garden City: Past, Present and Future* (London, 1992); Freestone, ‘Imagineering the City Beautiful: Parks, Gardens, and Town Planning Thought’, in G. Whitehead, (ed), *Planting the Nation* (Melbourne, 2001); see also Frederic Osborn and Lewis Mumford on Ebenezer Howard and the Garden City movement in their essays in the 1945 edition of Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (London, 1945 ed.)

<sup>175</sup> For example, see M. Kilvington and R. Wilkinson, *Community Attitudes to Vegetation in the Urban Environment: A Christchurch Case Study* (Lincoln, 1999); Anna Crighton, ‘Popular Purity a New City Cause’, *The Press*, 28 August 2003; Derrick Rooney, ‘No Going Back in Trees’, *The Press*, 28 August 2003; T. W. Walker, ‘We Need ‘Em’, *The Press*, 6 September 2003; Colin Burrows, ‘So You Think They’re English’, *The Press*, 6 September 2003; Mike Crean, ‘A Puzzle About Plants’, *The Press*, 12 February 2005

It is the loveliest town I have ever seen. It is a 'garden city'. To my mind Christchurch is exactly what we are trying to make our garden cities in England. It has the same broad streets, open spaces, and beautiful gardens...<sup>176</sup>

Tipples' objective was 'to consider the original title 'The Garden City'[, when] did this develop and why?' He traced a flow of ideas from architect Richard Norman Shaw, who developed England's first 'garden suburb' on London's periphery, to Christchurch's architect Samuel Hurst Seager, who developed Clifton Spur at Sumner as a garden suburb in 1902. Hurst Seager's involvement in the Christchurch Beautifying Association, founded in 1897, was noted, although the significance of this fact is not made explicit. A number of different strands – that Christchurch was a Wakefieldian settlement, and that Ebenezer Howard, who developed the international Garden City movement,<sup>177</sup> was influenced by Wakefield's notion of planned settlements – were presented, but under-examined. Tipples posited the endeavours of the Beautifying Association as a reaction to the squalor of the city in the period 1850-1875, and suggested that it capitalised on the efforts of early settlers to establish gardens. Following Patricia Morrison<sup>178</sup> and Miles Fairburn, Tipples again assumes that these gardens were established to remind settlers of home, and to mitigate a sense of social atomisation in the young colony. Although by the end of his article Tipples was still uncertain of exactly how or when Garden City ideas arrived in Christchurch, he concluded that 'it is not difficult to see how this name would have been appropriated by the residents... Howard's title... was clearly appreciated because it fitted Christchurch so well, and because it fitted the aims of the Beautifying Association which promoted it.'<sup>179</sup> This was generally how Christchurch was referred to by the 1920s. In this article, therefore, Tipples set out some important ideas, and in the process identified certain gaps in knowledge directly related to a cultural construction of the city.

Eric Pawson's work on Christchurch, its gardens and its Garden City identity took a broad brush-stroke approach. Essentially concerned with environmental transformation of the Christchurch area from the time of Pakeha settlement in 1850, Pawson's 2000 contribution to the volume *Southern Capital* gave some attention to the Garden City image. His discussion focused less on the efforts of private gardeners and more on the treatment of public green space. Tree planting in particular was one key aspect of transforming swamplands – unproductive and unhealthy in the Pakeha mind – into an idealised English landscape, replete

<sup>176</sup> John Gorst quoted in Rupert Tipples, 'Christchurch – The First Garden City?', *Journal of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture*, Vol.3, No.1, 1992, p.35

<sup>177</sup> See Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (London, 1902 ed.) (originally published as *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* in 1898)

<sup>178</sup> Patricia Morrison, *The Evolution of a City: The Growth of the City and Suburbs of Christchurch, the Capital of Canterbury, 1850-1903* (M.A., University of New Zealand, 1944), pp.25, 234-236

<sup>179</sup> Tipples, 'Christchurch – The First Garden City?', p.35

with gently sloping, grassed riverbanks, willows, and other markers of 'progress'. 'The metaphor of 'the garden' as a product of the hard work of reclaiming the wilderness is perhaps the most popular signifier of Christchurch to residents and visitors alike.'<sup>180</sup> Pawson raised the significance of the Garden City identity for actual environmental impact. It facilitated, for example, a climate in which a large number of plant nurseries could be sustained which, in turn, aided the irrevocable alteration of plant ecologies in the area. Of greater interest to Pawson was the cultural implication of a city placed in hazard's way – in the floodplain of the Waimakiriri River, and with air pollution problems due to other topographical features. He returned to these themes of urban fragility in his 2002 contribution to *Environmental Histories of New Zealand*, 'On the Edge', although here the emphasis was on Auckland.<sup>181</sup> One aspect of the importance of gardens to the new colony, surprisingly not mentioned by either Tipples or Pawson, was their economic significance. Whereas both looked to cultural and social explanations for the establishment of gardens, neither gave any attention to any possible pragmatic, economic explanations.

Between 1973 and 1979 Challenger produced a series of studies that looked at the efforts of early horticulturists and gardeners in Christchurch and Canterbury. Although not interested in 'the Garden City' as a concept, Challenger provided considerable insight into the period under current discussion. His work once more underscored the massive influence of British gardening trends on Christchurch's development. A paper read at the 1973 Jubilee Conference of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture, published in its journal of the following year,<sup>182</sup> described changes in the landscape from settlement, focussing almost entirely on the work of private gardeners, but emphasising links between them, public organisations and nurserymen. Challenger highlighted the transition of land use, in certain parts of Christchurch, from large estates to suburban subdivision, and provided maps showing the changes, focussing particularly on the Papanui and Merivale areas. '[T]he story of these gardens,' he suggested, 'their basic patterns of development and eventual breakdown into modern city suburbs would be an excellent historical study that could keep an investigator happy for a lifetime.'<sup>183</sup> The same point was reiterated by Christine Dann.<sup>184</sup> To date such a study has still not been attempted.

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<sup>180</sup> Eric Pawson, 'Confronting Nature', in Cookson and Dunstall (eds), p.64

<sup>181</sup> Pawson, 'On the Edge: Making Urban Places', in Pawson and Brooking (eds), pp.200-213

<sup>182</sup> Sydney Challenger, 'Changes in the Canterbury Landscape', *Garden History*, Vol 3, No 1, 1974

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, p.69

<sup>184</sup> '... the desirability of the quarter-acre section is so ingrained in kiwi consciousness that no one questions why or how it came to assert a dominant influence over urban landholding. Pending a thorough historical investigation of the subject, I can only offer a few hints on how the size and style of the cottage garden were transported from Great Britain and evolved in their own characteristic ways in New Zealand.' Dann, *Cottage Gardening*, p.17

Challenger explored the backgrounds of some of the head gardeners on these estates. He raised the issue of movement of ideas and their implications for physical, environmental change. Noting, for example, that Ambrose Taylor, Curator of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens from 1889, had been trained at Chatsworth under Sir Joseph Paxton, Challenger pondered the dissemination of a Chatsworth mentality throughout New Zealand. Edgar Taylor, son of Ambrose, worked for Alfred Buxton as landscape architect:

Buxton operated a landscape contracting business and had very wide connections in both North and South Island. The link between Paxton and Edgar Taylor carrying out landscape work in, for example, some of the more important and monied sheep stations in North Island, may be tenuous, but the influence... must have existed, in just the same way that it must have existed when Edgar Taylor, in 1946, later became landscape architect for Christchurch City Council. To prove this, of course, a close study of the style and character of the various designs carried out would need to be undertaken, but this insemination process is undoubtedly the way in which philosophies of design, consciously or unconsciously, are spread.<sup>185</sup>

Challenger's suggestion that a lineage of landscape design can be traced from Paxton at Chatsworth to Christchurch – and various New Zealand sheep stations – via professional and familial connections is important because it was these connections that established the forms later shaping the suburban gardens forged out of colonists' estates.

Indeed, Challenger played down the significance of other sources of influence. Noting varieties of sources for tracing changes in tastes, including garden plans, the gardens themselves and nursery lists – none of which are 'in plentiful supply in New Zealand' – he suggested, as a 'last resort', that one could 'turn to the "garden guides" and hope that their weight of emphasis in pagination and reference to varieties does reflect changing taste'. He concluded that 'too much emphasis cannot be placed on such an analysis.'<sup>186</sup> Likewise, the degree of importance he places on the work of the Christchurch Beautifying Association and the Canterbury Horticultural Society in pressing for 'public concern with its total landscape' is muted. Challenger believed that it was 'a pity that the interest developed [by the Association] became largely identified with "bedding-plant" gardens and "street competitions", obscuring the work of greater significance undertaken by the Association', that is, the general improvement of amenities in the city.<sup>187</sup> Challenger's point about the Association becoming associated with such narrow aims suggests its limited impact.

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<sup>185</sup> Challenger, 'Changes in the Canterbury Landscape', p.71

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., p.72

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p.75

The interest displayed by Challenger in the shaping of the landscape by men (no women are discussed by Challenger, except Charlotte Godley and Jane Deans, who act as sources of information on the work of men) who have expert knowledge in a particular genre of gardening was developed further in at least three other significant articles. In an article published by the Canterbury Horticultural Society in 1978,<sup>188</sup> he investigated the mystery surrounding references to a Horticultural Society in the *Lyttelton Times* for 1851, whereas the accepted date for the foundation of the organisation is the following year. Of particular interest is that this 1851 organisation was supposed to have had some involvement in the running of the Botanical Gardens; it was to be placed at their disposal. The Scottish William Wilson, later the first Mayor of Christchurch, was the central figure behind this endeavour. Two works of 1979 continued these themes, one focussing on Canterbury's Provincial Gardener, Enoch Barker, appointed in 1859, and trained at Chatsworth,<sup>189</sup> the other on a collection of significant nurserymen who rivalled the pre-eminent Wilson.<sup>190</sup>

The cumulative effect of this work by Challenger is to emphasise the role of individuals in transporting ideas about gardening from Britain (but not necessarily England) to the colony, and in highlighting the significance of the work of nurserymen in providing the means by which the recreation of the landscape could take place. The work of horticultural and beautifying associations was mentioned, but not given priority, and general cultural explanations for the development of gardens were not mentioned at all.

## Conclusion

The literature on vernacular gardens, gardens as sites of identity formation and places embodying cultural values, allows for particular interpretations of the home garden that provide useful antidotes to traditional studies of the New Zealand garden. Studies of Christchurch gardens, especially, have fallen into this category and have ended up reciting the mantra of Christchurch as an English Garden City. Any study of an urban space, particularly when the focus of that study is on human interaction with the natural world, should pay heed to the work of urban environmental historians. Their acknowledgment of culture as a shaper of environmental modification within an urban setting is instructive. Home gardens are unquestionably crucial to a city's overall environmental health. While the relative healthiness

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<sup>188</sup> Challenger, '1852? Or 1851? Puzzles Concerning the Horticultural Society, the Botanical Garden and William Wilson' *The City Beautiful*, April-May, 1978, pp.18-20

<sup>189</sup> Challenger, 'The Development of Early Canterbury Landscapes', *The Landscape*, March, 1979, pp.9-11

<sup>190</sup> Challenger, 'Pioneer Canterbury Nurserymen (2) Wilson's Major Competitors', *Annual Journal of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture*, No.7, 1979, pp.5-38

of Christchurch's environment over time can not be traced in this study, this study can shed light on those cultural forces that have impacted on the environment. As one of the most intimate points of contact between the individual, a matrix of received values and spontaneous outbursts, and what is usually perceived as 'the natural world', with its own independent, generative capacities, the home garden is a rich field for examining being human in the city. For historians of the British imperial fringe, a study of home gardens in a single city can shed light on imperial processes as they played out on the ground as opposed to how they were recorded on paper. Such studies, grounded in specific societies and environments, will be prerequisites for any solid development of transnational histories.

## 2

# Abundance

### Introduction

The pilgrims of December 1850 arrived in what they perceived to be an abundant environment awaiting improvement. This chapter demonstrates that in making gardens the Christchurch colonists were carving out an independent economic existence for themselves within indigenous space. In doing so, Fairburn's thesis that garden making was largely about gaining 'an independency' in a context of a 'naturally abundant' antipodean Promised Land is upheld. However, I argue that this was not merely about existing satisfactorily within a Pakeha hierarchy but was also about dispossessing Maori. That is to say conceptualising the Christchurch example in terms of the postcolonial model discussed earlier is helpful in seeing the role garden making in early Christchurch had for shaping an identity differentiated both from the imperial centre and from Ngai Tahu hapu (sub-tribe) in the area. I argue that the Canterbury Association was particularly concerned to carve out this space from Maori, and make self-provisioning easy for colonists.

### Land and Water

In order to properly understand the process of garden development in Christchurch, it is necessary to have in mind key features of land, water and flora. The most important geological feature of the Canterbury Plains is what George Jobberns called 'the immense thickness of the gravels, sands and silts of which they are built',<sup>1</sup> composed of material brought off the Southern Alps primarily through fluvial action. Layers of gravels made for overlapping shingle fans.<sup>2</sup> The remains of plant materials that developed on the gravels between successive floodings separate the layers. 'This remarkable sequence', wrote Brian Molloy and Len Brown in 1995, 'resembles a giant club sandwich'.<sup>3</sup> Charged with water from Waimakariri seepage and rainfall to the west of Christchurch these gravel layers, confined as they are and thus under pressure, constitute the city's aquifers. 'In the western

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<sup>1</sup> George Jobberns, 'The Canterbury Plains: Their Origin and Structure', in Speight, Wall and Laing (eds), *Natural History of Canterbury* (Christchurch, 1927), p.88

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.88

<sup>3</sup> Brian Molloy and Len Brown, 'Vegetation History', in Brian Molloy (ed.), *Riccarton Bush: Putaringamotu, Natural History and Management* (Christchurch, 1995), p.99

suburbs of Christchurch – Harewood, Avonhead, Wigram and Halswell – an appreciable amount of groundwater resurfaces in the urban streams (Avon, Heathcote and Styx Rivers) where the water-table approaches the ground surface.’<sup>4</sup> The importance of these aquifers, and the artesian wells subsequently bored to exploit them for gardening and other purposes, cannot be underestimated. It has been estimated that from the 1860s something in the order of 10,000 wells were sunk.<sup>5</sup> Christchurch was a wetland environment, with abundant fresh water.

Jobberns pointed out that although ‘tongues of fan gravel extend into parts of Christchurch City itself, marine and alluvial silts, swamp deposits, and wind blown sands comprise the lowlands’ of the Christchurch area.<sup>6</sup> He elaborated on the ‘extensive peat deposits in the low coastal lands, more particularly in the neighbourhood of Christchurch City...’ These peat deposits appear ‘between the lobes of gravel extending from the Waimakariri fan, and in the hollows separating the lines of dunes on the lower coastal lands.’<sup>7</sup> Peat was an important soil type through much of the area.

The peat deposits are the remnants of the massive areas of swamp upon which Christchurch was eventually built. Agnes Hercus found Captain Thomas’ choice of site for the Canterbury Association city to be deplorable because of the problems the swamplands were to cause residents for decades.<sup>8</sup> It was mostly dry and elevated, but raupo swamp stood in Lichfield Street, a deep gully ran through the centre of the city, an extensive swamp lay throughout Lower Riccarton. Sydenham was swampy in parts, as were parts of Linwood.<sup>9</sup>

Lines of sand ran through the area as well, however, an effect of the all-important Waimakariri River. The sand of the present shoreline was probably produced by ‘natural grinding of the gravel in [the Waimakariri River’s] upper and middle course’, and ‘having been distributed southwards by the current and blown inland by wind to form extensive sand dunes’.<sup>10</sup> This process, Brown and Weber have explained, has taken place over the last 6,500 years.<sup>11</sup> ‘Sand dune remnants... are present as far west as Richmond, Sandridge (South

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<sup>4</sup> Len Brown and John Weber, ‘Geology and Groundwater’, in Molloy (ed.), p.53

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.52

<sup>6</sup> Jobberns, p.94

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.96

<sup>8</sup> Agnes Hercus, *A City Built upon a Swamp: The Story of the Drainage of Christchurch, 1850-1903, with epilogue 1903-1936* (Christchurch, 1948), p.6

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp.7-8

<sup>10</sup> Jobberns, p.95

<sup>11</sup> Brown and Weber, p.47



Sydenham) and Hagley Park'.<sup>12</sup> At South Brighton, Bromley, Burwood, Linwood, Kaiapoi, 'and to the north of the Ashley [River] and Saltwater Creek' sand dunes had become 'more or less fixed by vegetation and settlement, but above North Brighton considerable inland drift is still taking place.' Furthermore, in addition 'to wind blown sand from the shore, dunes of a purely alluvial nature developed farther inland, the source of the sand being the erratic Waimakariri itself.' Found in lines, they ran into Papanui and Upper Fendalton.<sup>13</sup> The main elemental forces at work in the geomorphology of the area were the meandering Waimakariri River and the prevailing north-easterly wind.

The extreme variations in physical characteristics across the area chosen for Christchurch City, and upon which adjoining suburban areas soon developed from 1850 are clearly shown in the set of maps produced by Landcare Research in 1997.<sup>14</sup> Seventy-eight different soil types were listed for the then metropolitan area, in twenty-five broad categories (Figure 1). Stark differences between what became the suburbs of Riccarton and Fendalton, positioned beside each other, are plainly apparent. Whereas Riccarton sits on soils of moderate horticultural versatility with a high water table, Fendalton is positioned on the best of Christchurch soils, of very high horticultural versatility. By contrast, parts of the Port Hills, the remnants of a volcanic crater rim, were regarded as having the least horticultural versatility in the area, Clifton soils being some of the worst (Figures 2 and 3).

## Flora

Each of these landforms gave life to particular ecological systems; 'a mosaic of forest, scrub, grassland and wetland during the post-glacial period.'<sup>15</sup> The broad sweep of gravel extending from the Plains to the north-west into Christchurch – a wide area of relatively young ecosystems (less than five hundred years old) – were predominantly tussock grasslands. Ti kouka or cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*) and kanuka (*Kunzea ericoides*), both well suited to exposed and dry landscapes, were distinctive features rising above the tussocks (*Poa cita*), with pockets of kowhai (*Sophora microphylla*) and *Coprosma propinqua*. Closer towards the fringes of what is now Christchurch City, and roughly along the Avon from Hagley Park well into Linwood, older ecosystems of between 500 and 3,000 years old on deep Waimakariri soils supported large areas of black matipo (*Pittosporum tenuifolium*), lancewood (*Psuedopanax crassifolius*), manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*), cabbage tree, and a variety

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p.49

<sup>13</sup> Jobbarns, p.95

<sup>14</sup> 'Soil Map of Christchurch City', 'Suitability of Soils for Urban Use, Christchurch City', 'Potential Horticultural Versatility of Soils, Christchurch City' (Christchurch, Landcare Research, 1997)

<sup>15</sup> Molloy and Brown, p.105

of shrubs.<sup>16</sup>

The depressions between the shingle fan and the coastal dune systems were characterised by extensive areas of raupo swamp as has been mentioned. Eric Pawson's map showing wetland plant associations at the time, reconstructed from the 'Black Maps', illustrates the point that most of the area conformed with this ecological type.<sup>17</sup> The deepest areas of swamp on the Canterbury Plains would have supported raupo only, but shallower areas would have contained 'plenty of *Phormium tenax*, and niggerhead (*Carex secta*) and, near the sea, a fringe of the bulrush (*Scirpus lacustris*)'.<sup>18</sup> As this vegetation died and was transformed into peat, Leonard Cockayne conjectured, the water level dropped so that shrubs could become established, 'especially *Leptospermum scoparium*, *Hebe salicifolia*, var. *Communis*, *Coprosma robusta*, *C. propinqua* and the series of hybrids between the two last.' The water level would then in turn drop further, allowing for succession to swamp-forest, especially characterised by the establishment of kahikatea (*Podocarpus dacrydioides*). Swamp-forest was present at Riccarton, Papanui and Kaiapoi. Cockayne was aware that at Riccarton Bush, which had been retained by the Deans family ('would that their splendid, far-seeing example had been followed by others and that other pieces of the primitive vegetation had been unmolested, especially portions of the tussock-grassland!') did not display the original association. Drainage had been responsible for great changes, but it still remained 'fairly typical swamp-forest with its dominating *Podocarpus dacrydioides* and an occasional matai (*P. spicatus*)'. Ferns, though, were lacking 'and it is certain that the tree-fern *Dicksonia squarrosa* and the creek-fern (*Blechnum fluviatile*) would be present. On the other hand there is undoubtedly more of the milk-tree (*Paratrophis microphylla*) than in the primitive association.'<sup>19</sup> The collection of articles on aspects of the Riccarton Bush published by the Riccarton Bush Trust in 1995 illustrates both how unique and complex this ecological zone is within the Christchurch area. Indeed, Cockayne, in 1904, claimed that it was 'the last piece of forest of its kind on the face of the Earth'.<sup>20</sup>

Where shrubs did not establish on the swamp, to be followed by forest trees, the build up of peat in swamp areas might lead to the establishment of *Sphagnum* moss, 'and bog was the succession'. Bogland initially prevailed at St Albans, for example, and late into the nineteenth

<sup>16</sup> Di Lucas, Colin Meurk, Jeremy Head, Ian Lynn, *Indigenous Ecosystems of Otautahi Christchurch 3: The Plains of Shirley-Papanui & Fendalton-Waimairi* (Christchurch, 1996)

<sup>17</sup> Eric Pawson, 'Confronting Nature', in John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall (eds), *Southern Capital: Towards a City Biography* (Christchurch, 2000), p.61

<sup>18</sup> Leonard Cockayne, 'The Vegetation and Flora of the Canterbury Plains', in Speight, Wall and Laing (eds), p.119

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p.120

<sup>20</sup> Molloy and Brown, p.114

century at Marshlands, Horseshoe Lake and adjacent to the River Styx. In fact, it was the mosses that attracted Robert Brown to settle St Albans, where he became a world class expert on the subject, and influenced Cockayne.<sup>21</sup> ‘On the *spagnum manuka* would be dominant, there was a species of *Dracophyllum* and sundews (*Drosera*) and bladderworts (*Utricularia*) were not wanting’, Cockayne noted.<sup>22</sup>

The coastal areas of Christchurch were entirely different again. These consisted both of dune and estuarine ecosystems. Large areas of older dune ecosystems covered Burwood west to Marshlands Road, with a pocket covering parts of Bromley, a thin band running roughly south-north in Linwood, from Tuam Street to Robson Avenue, and unsurprisingly at Redcliffs and Sumner by the Estuary and sea. These areas supported trees and shrubs such as the cabbage tree, *Coprosma* ssp., broadleaf (*Griselinia littoralis*), akiraho (*Olearia avicenniifolia*), golden akeake (*Olearia paniculata*), lemonwood (*Pittosporum eugenoides*), black matipo, poroporo (*Solanum laciniatum*), kowhai, *Muehlenbeckia astonii*, *M. complexa*, and the shrub daisy *Olearia odorata*. They also supported *Phormium tenax*, the New Zealand flax, bracken fern (*Pteridium esculentum*) and *Pelargonium inodorum*. A large band of younger dune ecosystems stretched from Southshore north to the Waimakariri, and through Aranui-Bexley-Wainoni, the two areas divided by a characteristic depression of peaty soils, and the Avon River emptying into the Estuary creating a small estuarine environment. These younger dune systems were most notable for their groundcovers. On the most unstable areas, pingao (*Demoschoenus spiralis*), was the only plant to be found.<sup>23</sup> Sand sedge (*Carex pumila*), New Zealand flax, and spinifex (*Spinifex hirsutus*) grew in more stable dune hollows.<sup>24</sup> A large estuarine system, where the Heathcote River empties into the Estuary, blanketed the area from Bromley south through Ferrymead, and bordered by what is now Port Hills Road and Bridle Path Road. The vegetation of this estuarine environment, and on a smaller scale at the mouth of the Avon, consisted mainly of shrubs, tussocks and flaxes. *Coprosma propinqua*, *Leptospermum scoparium*, the marsh ribbon wood (*Plagianthus divaricatus*), toetoe (*Cortaderia richardii*), holy grass (*Hierochloa redolens*), the sea rush (*Juncus maritimus*), New Zealand flax, New Zealand mudwort (*Limosella lineata*) and the sea

<sup>21</sup> New Zealand Federation of University Women, *St Albans: Swamp to Suburbs, An Informal History*, (Christchurch, 1989), p.155

<sup>22</sup> Cockayne, ‘Vegetation and Flora’, p.119

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p.122

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p.130. Cockayne also gives an extensive plant list showing names, characteristics and habitats in the same article, pp.125-144. Lucas *et al* give for the area a number of trees and shrubs such as akeake, cabbage tree, manuka, kanuka, poroporo, as well as brooms – *Carmichaelia appressa*, and *C. robusta* – smaller coprosmas, muehlenbeckias, toetoe and *Corokia cotoneaster*. These do not sit well with Cockayne’s description, and it seems unlikely these plants would have lived on the dune systems before settlement. Di Lucas and Colin Meurk, *Indigenous Ecosystems of Otautahi Christchurch 2: The Coastal Plains of Hagley-Ferrymead & Burwood-Pegasus* (Christchurch, 1996)

primrose (*Samolus repens*) were densely clustered together in areas seething with other forms of life.<sup>25</sup>

The Port Hills to the south marked another distinct ecological zone. W. Boyce, in his 1939 Masters thesis *An Ecological Account of Tussock Grassland and Other Plant Communities of the Cashmere Valley and Adjacent Areas of the Port Hills, Canterbury*, detailed the plant associations. Along with numerous grass species, Boyce listed a number of small bushes and shrubs that were present: *Discaria toumatou*, *Corokia cotoneaster*, *Fuchsia colensoi*, *Edwardsia prostrata* (now *Sophora prostrata*), and *Muehlenbeckia complexa*. ‘Large thickets of *Discaria toumatu* were a conspicuous feature of the hillsides, when the first settlers arrived. Of the larger trees *Cordyline australis* would be conspicuous in the grassland. *Edwardsia microphylla* might also be seen.’<sup>26</sup> Significantly, while there was no direct evidence that there had ever been forest in the Cashmere Valley, nearby remnant forest and traces of other forest pockets in the area, suggested to Boyce that there ‘seems to be no reason why bush should not have been present in parts of the Cashmere Valley.’<sup>27</sup> Towards the bottom of the hill there was certainly swamp land (see Figure 3) and plentiful supplies of *Phormium tenax*, which caused Sir John Cracroft Wilson, who settled in the Cashmere area, some consternation.<sup>28</sup> He also remarked on extensive fernlands.<sup>29</sup>

## Zones

The Christchurch area should therefore be conceptualised as a set of interconnected ecological zones of different types, and these had a direct bearing on what humans could grow there. Stark differences may be drawn between particular types. These include tussock grasslands with their associated birds of prey and nesting seabirds, the kahikatea forest pockets of Riccarton and Papanui, mossy swamplands thronging with wetland birds and nesting cormorants, as in St Albans, Opawa and many other parts of the city, including the central area itself, areas of swamp interspersed with ancient lines of sand, as in Richmond, Sydenham and Linwood, and estuarine and dunal systems around New Brighton, Aranui, Bexely, Bromley, Ferrymead, Redcliffs and Sumner. To the south, the Port Hills hosted tussocks and, in particular valleys, remnant pockets of scrub. Cashmere, spreading over this area, stands out in this respect. Ecologically speaking, ‘Christchurch’ was a highly dynamic

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> W. Boyce, *An Ecological Account of Tussock Grassland and Other Plant Communities of the Cashmere Valley and Adjacent Areas of the Port Hills* (M.Sc., University of Canterbury, 1939), p.125

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p.126

<sup>28</sup> Sir John Cracroft Wilson, *Diary/ Reminiscences*, c1854, pp.118-120, ARC 1991.53, CM

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p.46

system linked to Lake Ellesmere, inland forest areas and the braided river beds of the Plains.

Unsurprisingly, the first humans in the area were drawn to it by its rich and diverse resources, and their effects on the landscape – notably the burning of much of the forested area – were considerable.<sup>30</sup> According to Robert Harris, Waitaha, Ngati Mamoe and Ngai Tahu settlements reflect their relationship with the environment. These were to be found at the mouth of the Otakaro (Avon River), on the bank of the Opawaho (Heathcote River), and at Rae Kura (Redcliffs/ Moncks Bay), near the mouth of the Estuary. Putaringamotu (Riccarton Bush) and Puari (on the Avon by Hagley Park) were notable Waitaha settlements; in addition, later Ngai Tahu settlements were established at Te Oranga (Horseshoe Lake), Oruapaeroa (near present day North Beach), Otautahi (in the ‘Avon Loop’) and Omokihi, on the Opawaho near Cashmere. However, due to the swampiness of the area, all of these were seasonal settlements; the major Ngai Tahu pa of the area were at Kaiapoi and Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere).<sup>31</sup> The highly dynamic environment therefore provided ‘resource zones’<sup>32</sup> – places of abundance which drew human activity to them. In terms of later public health problems from permanent settlement in the swamplands, Captain Thomas’ choice may well have been deplorable, but the site was rich in excellent soils, abundant fresh water, and with easily obtainable foods.

The Ngai Tahu population of what would become the greater Christchurch area had reached its nadir in 1831 and 1832 after the repeated incursions of Ngati Toa, led by Te Rauparaha, and especially with the fall of the Kaiapoi and Onawe pa, in which hundreds were slain or captured.<sup>33</sup> For Ngai Tahu, Te Rauparaha’s raids were a ‘massive disaster’.<sup>34</sup> Further deaths in the region no doubt ensued from the presence of European diseases such as measles, tuberculosis and influenza which, according to Harry Evison, ‘probably caused the death of about one-half of the Ngai Tahu population’ in the South Island.<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, the establishment of European whaling stations, on Banks Peninsula and particularly further south in Otago drew, or had already drawn, much of the remaining inland population off.<sup>36</sup> By 1850, therefore, the Ngai Tahu population around Christchurch was much depleted. However,

<sup>30</sup> Pawson, ‘Confronting Nature’, p.65. See also Geoffrey Rice, *Christchurch Changing: An Illustrated History* (Christchurch, 1999), p.9

<sup>31</sup> Robert Harris, ‘As it was: Early Maori and European Settlement’, in S. Owen (ed.) *The Estuary: Where Our Rivers Meet the Sea* (Christchurch, 1992), p.14

<sup>32</sup> Peter Coutts, ‘Merger or Takeover’, *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, Vol.78, No.4, 1969, pp.497-498; James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (Auckland, 1996), pp.38-56, and especially pp.44-50 where he discusses ‘garden islands’

<sup>33</sup> Ron Crosby, *The Musket Wars: A History of Inter-Iwi Conflict 1806-45* (Auckland, 1999), p.242

<sup>34</sup> Atholl Anderson, *The Welcome of Strangers* (Dunedin, 1998), p.90

<sup>35</sup> Harry Evison, *Te Wai Pounamu: The Greenstone Island* (Wellington, 1993), p.86

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p.90

the various traditional mahinga-kai were still viewed as places of significance, as will be seen.

Some early European settlers believed Maori in the area to be living in a passive relationship with their environs. Elite characters such as John Hall regarded Maori as children that needed to be entertained and looked after, and who could be goaded into work for a time.<sup>37</sup> Conway Lucas Rose, on the other hand, thought they were ‘idle, inquisitive and sordid’, and that the women were ‘hideous, and stagger about with a peculiar gait, which makes you think they are lunatics’.<sup>38</sup> Cracroft Wilson remarked that:

They [Maori] reside for the most part on their reserves & they work these for themselves sufficiently to sustain life. They are with a rare exception here & there a lazy race, & are in my opinion inferior in energy even to an Asiatic. Would it be credited that at the mouth of the Rivers Avon & Heathcote the finest fish are so abundant, that a party who went down from Christ Church actually caught in 2 hours such a quantity that they could have sold them in Christ Church for £5... I never heard of a Maoree who could be induced to undertake so lucrative a business.<sup>39</sup>

The naturally abundant environment was awaiting utilisation in this typical statement. Europeans could achieve this, but not ‘lazy’ Maori.

Not all Europeans felt this way, however, and Maori cultivations in the area gave the lie to such sentiments. Food crops familiar to the European settlers were already being cultivated there as elsewhere in the South Island. Harry Evison noted that in 1844 ‘European visitors remarked at Maori agriculture from Foveaux Strait to Banks Peninsula’; the cultivations at Puari on the Peninsula extended to about 250 acres in 1848.<sup>40</sup> When the British settlers arrived they were surprised to find that local Maori were already producing quantities of corn, peas, cabbages and other familiar food crops which had been brought to the area following contact with earlier whalers and sealers. European visitors to the Rhodes farm on the Peninsula from Lyttelton brought back ‘magnificent “cobs” of Indian corn, perfectly developed... and some water-melons also perfectly ripe, both of which the Maories had grown in their gardens...’<sup>41</sup> Maori at Te Tuahiwi, north of Christchurch, brought such

<sup>37</sup> John Hall, *Diary, Shipboard and Arrival in New Zealand, July-Aug 1852*, 1 August 1852: ‘... To amuse them [local Maori] he [Customs House Officer] used to play games with them such as hunt the slipper, which kept them in excellent humour. They are willing to work in a number, but seem afraid to engage singly; their childish apprehension will I trust wear off.’ ARCH 219, *CCL*

<sup>38</sup> Conway Lucas Rose, ‘Account of the Canterbury Settlement New Zealand’, 1852, p.13, 207/54, *CM*

<sup>39</sup> Cracroft Wilson, p.78

<sup>40</sup> Harry Evison, *The Long Dispute: Maori Land Rights and European Colonisation in Southern New Zealand* (Christchurch, 1997), p.177; see also Anderson, *The Welcome of Strangers*, pp.151-2

<sup>41</sup> John Robert Godley to his father, 9 April 1850, J. R. Godley and E. G. Wakefield Correspondence, Box 3, Vol. 3, p.466, 475/50, *CM*

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Deleted: (Dunedin, 1998),

produce into the young settlement for bartering.<sup>42</sup> Indeed some settlers, such as Edward Ward, believed Maori to be rather rapacious. In a diary entry for 1 January 1851 he commented on this: 'Bought... a mat of new potatoes from a Maori. These folk are very hard to deal with, as they ask exorbitant prices, and don't understand being beaten down in English, so that one is forced to walk away in despair. They have pigs, peas, potatoes and poultry for sale, and plenty of buyers if they would only ask reasonable prices.'<sup>43</sup> Ngai Tahu were initially keen to accommodate 'white men', at a price. In 1852 Rangatira (chief) George Williams Metehau, for example, said he desired 'that white men should dwell at my place at Te Tuahiwi. But it depends on the payment; £8 a-year is the payment for dwelling in the land, to cultivate potatoes, wheat, corn, and all other seeds...'<sup>44</sup> Clearly, the British did not have a monopoly on a 'profit' ethic.

Within the Christchurch area – that is, between Tuahiwi and Kaiapoi to the north and Rapaki and Taumutu to the south – Ngai Tahu cultivations were limited, however. Terry Ryan believes cabbage trees (*Cordyline australis*) had been planted as signposts for mahinga kai (food gathering places) throughout the swamplands, although this is difficult to verify.<sup>45</sup> It was, however, a useful food plant, treated reverently. Wiremu Te Uki, another Ngai Tuahuriri rangatira, made this clear: 'If any one of us even a Maori set fire to any of these cabbage trees, he would be killed at once. That is our law.'<sup>46</sup> In some parts of Canterbury it was definitely cultivated, so Ryan is possibly correct.<sup>47</sup> The best evidence regarding sites of cultural significance to Maori in the area are the mahinga kai lists compiled by Ngai Tuahuriri kaumatua (leaders or old people) in 1880.<sup>48</sup> As Te Maire Tau has noted, '[t]hese lists are critical because they are the earliest written records from Ngai Tahu elders that allow us to construct a picture of what the landscape was like in the 1840s', and show the presence of introduced vegetables in cultivation.<sup>49</sup>

Of the sites of interest mentioned in the list for the Kaiapoi-Waikirikiriri Region, few are relevant to the present study, and none of these show evidence of cultivation. Putaringamotu, in Tau's translation, was a settlement and food gathering site with a proper fort. As well as native trout and flounder the foods were 'eel, blind eel, fernroot and its foods of the forest

<sup>42</sup> Terry Ryan, interviewed at Rehua Marae, 25 September 2004

<sup>43</sup> Edward Ward, 'The Ward Diary', quoted in *The Press*, 14 February 1925

<sup>44</sup> George Metehau, 'To The White People', *LT*, 12 June 1852

<sup>45</sup> Terry Ryan, 'Ti Kouka Whenua', <http://library.christchurch.org.nz/TiKoukaWhenua/>. Accessed 30 June 2006

<sup>46</sup> W.A. Taylor Papers, Box 1, Folder 7, pp.47-48, *CM*

<sup>47</sup> Anderson, p.145; Harry Evison, *Te Wai Pounamu: The Greenstone Island*, p.5

<sup>48</sup> See Anderson, pp.131-133

<sup>49</sup> Te Maire Tau, *Cultural Report on the Southwest Area Plan for the Christchurch City Council* (Christchurch, 2005), p.12

Deleted: (Wellington, 1993),

were from the Hinau, Black Pine, White Pine and the forest fowl were native pigeon, brown parrot, parson bird (tui).<sup>50</sup> Upper Riccarton had a similar description. Opawaho was also a settlement and food gathering site with a proper fort. 'Its foods were eel, lamprey, adult whitebait, smelt fernroot and berries.'<sup>51</sup> But the cultivated areas were at Yarrs Lagoon,<sup>52</sup> Rolleston<sup>53</sup> and West Melton.<sup>54</sup> Likewise, when the original claims for mahinga kai were put to the Native Land Court in 1868, cultivated sites were not the question; within the Christchurch area places of dormitory and food gathering were claimed.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, as Tau has put it, 'for Ngai Tahu Christchurch was an out post food gathering site to Kaiapoi'.<sup>56</sup> Put another way, the swamplands that the Canterbury Association chose for Christchurch were surrounded by productive gardens supporting a population of perhaps 500, including the Peninsula.<sup>57</sup>

### Putaringamotu

At Putaringamotu (probably meaning 'a place to catch forest fowl',<sup>58</sup> though often translated as Place of the Severed Ear or Place of an Echo – each a reference to the pocket of relict kahikatea forest there), Riccarton was leased to the Deans brothers by the local hapu from 1843. By January 1844 John Deans could write to his father:

We have got about three roods of garden ground cleared and in crop, cabbages, peas, potatoes, onions, leeks and parsnips look very well, but carrots, turnips, melons, cucumbers, etc., are eaten up by a small fly... We have also got a good many fruit trees... and a number of strawberry plants. Next year we expect to have plenty of strawberries and perhaps a few apples and plums.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p.20

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p.19

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p.15

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p.16

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p.17

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, Te Maire Tau, 'Ngai Tahu – From 'Better Be Dead and Out of the Way' to 'To Be Seen to Belong'', in Cookson and Dunstall (eds), p.224

<sup>56</sup> Tau, *Cultural Report*, p.13

<sup>57</sup> Anderson, p.187

<sup>58</sup> Te Maire's rationale for this translation follows: pu – a clump of forest, tari – a noose, and motu – to cut the noose. In this reading 'nga' is simply a passive. Other readings have assumed that the middle section should be read as 'taringa', or ear. Te Maire Tau, email, 10 February 2006.

<sup>59</sup> John Deans to John Deans Senior, 10 January 1844, in John Deans (ed.) *Pioneers of Canterbury: Deans Letters 1840-1854* (Christchurch, 1997), p.81



The abundance of the garden at Putaringamotu continued to be a key strand in this correspondence: 'Our garden crops were all very good last season', John Deans wrote in 1845.

I think I never saw a larger crop of potatoes... and all the vegetables were as good as I could wish to see. Our fruit trees are getting on very well. We had about twenty very good apples on one tree and one plum which proved to be a greengage. In a year or two we should have plenty of apples, plums, cherries and peaches. We have a good quantity of strawberries, but they don't seem to bear well here, and we have also got a few gooseberry slips.<sup>60</sup>

In 1847, John reported along the same lines that

Our garden gets on very well; we are getting it well stocked with fruit trees. We have this year more than a dozen apple trees loaded with fruit, a good many plum, cherry and peach trees, all with more or less fruit, and a great many young ones coming in. We have also some gooseberry, currant and pear trees not yet bearing, and a few roots of rhubarb. Strawberries won't do here.<sup>61</sup>

Two years later the brothers were propagating fruit trees with an aim to sell them on to the anticipated settlers.<sup>62</sup> Their garden became 'the admiration of all the new colonists on account of the luxuriance in growth of everything in it.' Peach trees had to be propped up due to heavy fruiting, while 'some of the plum trees, such as Orleans and yellow gages, have been covered in fruit in a manner I never saw before.' Trading trees, bushes and currant canes for 'valuable seeds and trees' was a central interest.<sup>63</sup> In February 1853 John Deans wrote that the 'garden looks uncommonly well. The apples, plums and peaches are abundant'.<sup>64</sup> In March, again, 'We have a very abundant crop of fruit. All are over now but the apples, pears, and peaches, and seldom a day goes over that we do not carry a bushel or so of the first.'<sup>65</sup> He repeated the theme to his brother later in the year: 'There is a great show of fruit in the garden.' The fruit trees 'are the admiration of everyone.'<sup>66</sup> A few months later, he recorded his 'very abundant crop of gooseberries, currants, etc., and have been preserving some.'<sup>67</sup> Riccarton, the first European garden on the plains, was a site of abundance.

Godley was extremely impressed by what he saw at Riccarton. The garden, he wrote to his father in 1850,

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<sup>60</sup> John Deans to John Deans Senior, 28 September 1845, Ibid., p.91

<sup>61</sup> John Deans to John Deans Senior, 20 December 1847, Ibid., p.118

<sup>62</sup> John Deans to John Deans Senior, 8 December 1849, Ibid., p.157

<sup>63</sup> John Deans to John Deans Senior, 17 February 1851, Ibid., p.202

<sup>64</sup> John Deans to John Deans Senior, 8 February 1853, Ibid., p.239

<sup>65</sup> John Deans to John Deans Senior, 21 March 1853, Ibid., pp.245-246

<sup>66</sup> John Deans to James Deans, 27 October 1853, Ibid., p.263

<sup>67</sup> John Deans to James Deans, 2 January 1854, Ibid., p.271

which never saw or heard of manure, is producing luxuriantly every kind of vegetables and fruits. I never saw a finer show of them. Apples, pears, peaches – everything, in short, flourishes. I wish I could send home a specimen of the apples – they look like wax-work.<sup>68</sup>

His wife, Charlotte Godley, who was concerned with beautification around Christchurch, involved herself with food production at Riccarton. Writing to her mother from there in 1851, she remarked on gardening. Commenting on books recently sent out, she said ‘... I shall dole them to those whom I think worthy, after trying some of the directions, ‘cheap dishes,’ etc., on myself. They must be a little modified here, where a cabbage, for instance, costs a good deal more than a pound of the best beef or mutton; sixpence or even ninepence. The gardening directions will be most useful.’<sup>69</sup> The expense of fresh produce was her primary stimulus for establishing the garden. ‘[We] have to keep and bring everything we want, as we get nothing here but fresh meat, milk and butter. Even our vegetables we bring from our own garden, for there is no certain supply of them here, and the new potatoes are still 2d. a lb.’<sup>70</sup> Economic autonomy for Charlotte Godley was of great importance, and the garden was one means of achieving this.

One potential problem, as the nurseryman and future mayor William Wilson was later to point out, was the wind. The forest remnant became an instructive feature for early gardeners. Charlotte Godley noted that ‘things grow so fast under a fence, or any protection against the wind, that garden work is very satisfactory, unless you are hoping, as I am, to go away, and leave your work for others.’<sup>71</sup> Cracroft Wilson alluded to this in 1854. Discussing the great need for shelter he commented:

The garden of the late Mr John Deans is perfectly a case in point. It lies to the North East of the Riccarton Bush one of the few bits of Forest which has escaped the grass fires of Yore. The fruit trees in it are forwarder than those in any garden in Christ Church, & doubtless could they speak, they would say, a South Wester was not such a terrible thing after all.<sup>72</sup>

The garden at Putaringamotu, in its abundance of edible foods and demonstrations about shelter, was the model garden for the new settlers.

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<sup>68</sup> John Robert Godley to his father, 9 April 1850, J. R. Godley and E. G. Wakefield Correspondence, Box 3, Vol. 3, p.455, 475/50, *CM*

<sup>69</sup> Charlotte Godley, 4 March 1851, in Charlotte Godley, *Letters from Early New Zealand by Charlotte Godley 1850-1853* (Christchurch, 1951), p.182

<sup>70</sup> Charlotte Godley, 14 January 1852, *Ibid.*, p.289

<sup>71</sup> Charlotte Godley to her mother, 14 January 1852, *Ibid.*, p.287

<sup>72</sup> John Cracroft Wilson, p.84

## Settler Space

At the end of 1850, 782 ‘pilgrims’ arrived at Lyttelton. Of these, 575 were ‘emigrants’ (labourers) and 207 ‘colonists’ (land owners).<sup>73</sup> Ngai Tahu were at last outnumbered. Wakefield reported to John Robert Godley in May 1851 that the number of people who had left for Canterbury was 1800.<sup>74</sup> By December 1851, the *Lyttelton Times* reported, the population of the new colony was estimated to exceed ‘three thousand souls’;<sup>75</sup> Godley’s census of the same time put the Christchurch population at 1189 including children.<sup>76</sup> Self-sufficiency for the first settlers, including those there already, was of paramount importance. Ngai Tahu stepped up production of European foods<sup>77</sup> and attempted to participate in the commerce of the new colony, but charged too much. They were excluded from economic activity through the creation of this self-sufficient settler space. By the beginning of 1852, 60 acres within Christchurch was fenced in gardens.<sup>78</sup> Conveniently, the myth of superior European (British) productiveness enabled the Ngai Tahu gardening efforts to be negated. By 1900, in the popular imagination, Maori might never have existed:

... at the risk of being egotistical, it may be asserted that all of the Pilgrim Fathers, the leaders and the rank and file alike, were of the true British stuff, filled with indomitable pluck and energy, and above all, determined to push forward in the work to which they had put their hands, and to persevere until they had made the desert wastes of the Canterbury Plains blossom as the rose.<sup>79</sup>

I am arguing here for the Christchurch gardening myth to be situated within a context of colonial denial of Maori achievement. The productiveness of the pilgrims was certainly part of an imported morality, as Eric Pawson has pointed out, but it existed in tension with those nearby engaged in garden making and making full use of the abundant environment.

The *Lyttelton Times*, from the outset, pressed the importance of making these gardens on the colonists. In more than one editorial of 1851 the newspaper almost demanded that everyone cultivate at once. ‘[L]et every poor man hire his acre or two of land, and cultivate it during his spare hours. There is an abundance of land in the neighbourhood of Christchurch to be hired

<sup>73</sup> Evison, *Long Dispute*, p.225

<sup>74</sup> Edward Gibbon Wakefield to John Robert Godley, J. R. Godley and E. G. Wakefield Correspondence, Box 1, Vol. 1, p.164, 475/50, *CM*

<sup>75</sup> Editorial, *LT*, 20 December 1851

<sup>76</sup> ‘A General Summary of the Census of Population from the Kaikouras to the Waitaki, not including the Akaroa & Pigeon Bay Districts’, in James Hight and C. Straubel (eds), *A History of Canterbury*, Vol. 1, Appendix V

<sup>77</sup> Evison, *Te Wai Pounamu*, p.334

<sup>78</sup> ‘A General Summary of the Census’, *op. cit.*

<sup>79</sup> G. R. H. ‘What Christchurch was like in 1852’, *The Press*, 20 January, 1900

on very moderate rents, which may be cultivated at once with the spade, and with little more trouble than an English garden; and which before this time next year will have yielded a rich return.’<sup>80</sup> And again: ‘The man who, next autumn, will shew the largest quantity of human food for the capital which he has expended since his arrival, ought to receive the honour of a civic crown from his fellow colonists.’<sup>81</sup> In the same vein, the newspaper’s column ‘Errors of Immigrants’ sought to warn of the dangers of not growing useful crops. ‘We are anxious, and we think reasonably so, to see every settler a grower to a greater or lesser extent. Every kitchen garden, every poor man’s acre, in course of tillage we hail as an additional reason to hope for prosperity as a settlement. Everything depends on the extent to which we are producers.’<sup>82</sup>

### Otautahi

Otautahi was another critical site for European occupation of Christchurch as it was at the highest navigable point of the Avon. Here Edward Jollie completed the survey of Christchurch in November 1849, spending his evenings eel-fishing, pig hunting and bird shooting. ‘Quails were very plentiful at that time & I shot large numbers on the site of Christchurch’, he later recalled.<sup>83</sup> Jollie’s ‘Plot of Christchurch’ of 1850 marked out a ‘Botanical Garden’ in the same area: twenty-three acres in that bend of the Otakaro, or Avon River. The area, according to Brittan, whose farm was nearby, was covered in tutu, fern and grass.<sup>84</sup> The ‘Botanical Garden’ here was cleared and maintained as Christchurch’s first plant nursery by William Wilson, but it is now something of a mystery. Johannes C. Andersen noted only that the garden was at ‘The Bricks’ – the point of the Avon River at which vessels coming up from the Estuary landed.<sup>85</sup> Charlie Challenger wrote about the garden in more detail in *The City Beautiful* for April/May 1978 and in the *Press* that year.<sup>86</sup> The same year he published a substantial biographical note on Wilson in the *Annual Journal of the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture*.<sup>87</sup> His evidence regarding the garden was drawn almost entirely from scant mentions in the *Lyttelton Times*. Eric Pawson, in *Southern Capital*,<sup>88</sup> mentioned the site again, relying on Challenger’s evidence.

<sup>80</sup> *LT*, 14 June, 1851

<sup>81</sup> *LT*, 20 September 1851

<sup>82</sup> *LT*, 18 October 1851

<sup>83</sup> Edward Jollie, *Recollections 1841-1863*, p. 68, ARC 1900.285, Folder 1382, *CM*

<sup>84</sup> W. G. Brittan, ‘The Harvest’, *LT*, 19 March 1853

<sup>85</sup> Johannes C. Andersen, *Old Christchurch in Picture and Story* (Christchurch, 1949), p.219

<sup>86</sup> Sydney Challenger, ‘1852? or 1851? Puzzles Concerning the Horticultural Society, the Botanical Garden and William Wilson’, *CB*, April/May 1978, pp.18-20; Sydney Challenger, ‘William Wilson – Landowner and Early Nurseryman’, *The Press*, 20 May 1978

<sup>87</sup> Sydney Challenger, ‘Studies on Pioneer Canterbury Nurserymen (1) William Wilson’, *Annual Journal of the Royal New Zealand Institute*, No.6, 1978, pp.139-162

<sup>88</sup> Pawson, ‘Confronting Nature’, p.67

There had been discussion as early as March 1851 – that is three months after the arrival of the First Four Ships – regarding the establishment of a Horticultural Society. That month, the *Lyttleton Times* reported that some of the land set aside for a Botanical Garden was ‘to be placed at the disposal’ of this Horticultural Society, and it suggested that by public subscription ‘a good gardener could be hired probably for £50 a year’. He could ‘at once build his cottage on the land, and fence it in, and dig up, in the winter months, a sufficient piece of land to begin upon.’ In the Canterbury Association’s Deed on 9 September 1851 the Gardens were listed as ‘lands to be reserved and held in trust by the Association for public purposes’<sup>89</sup>. However, just a few days later William Wilson was advertising his new plant business, located in the ‘Botanical Gardens’, opposite ‘The Bricks’. Challenger conjectured from this that Wilson must have had a prior arrangement with the property controllers.<sup>90</sup>

The original handwritten lease agreements signed by John Robert Godley and Wilson relating to the site, now held at Archives New Zealand, confirm Challenger’s conjecture. This material shows that Wilson paid nothing for his use of the site until mid 1852, and that he actually lived on the site and had probably been living there since mid 1851. The earliest of Wilson’s bids for the use of the land held in the Archives was made on 10 April 1852. It is a rather brief and uncomplicated bid, and is worth quoting. It simply reads

Tender

For the occupation of the Botanical Garden and House adjoining I propose to pay a yearly contract of Five Pounds

and is followed by a note:

My Tender is made for the exclusive purpose of cultivation and as each Acre costs Nine Pounds for clearing, it follows – if the true interest of the Garden is considered – that each Pound offered by me must be equivalent to Ten Pounds offered by any one else for the purpose of Grazing.<sup>91</sup>

With some amendments, the tender was agreed to on 20 April, and included a house on the site itself.<sup>92</sup> Also included in the agreement was an allowance from the Association for £1 per acre cleared to be reimbursed to Wilson, as long as there was no money owing. Rent was to be paid quarterly, in advance. Wilson wrote another brief and blunt note to the Land Office on 7 June 1852 saying that since ‘... there are three (3) acres of the Botanical Garden under

<sup>89</sup> Challenger, ‘Studies on Pioneer Canterbury Nurserymen (1) William Wilson’, p.145

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p.145

<sup>91</sup> Wilson to Godley, 10 April 1852, CH290, Item 51/7 bundle F [25], *ANZCRO*

<sup>92</sup> 20 April 1852, CH290, 7/7 b2 Item 9, Folder D, *ANZCRO*

cultivation and in a fit state for the reception of Seeds [he was thereby exempted] from making any deposit.<sup>93</sup> This was strange given that he had, the previous week, paid £3.0.4 ½ ‘as rent for one Quarter of a year from the date hereof’.<sup>94</sup> It meant that despite what was in the agreement, which was generous anyway, Wilson had not paid the first quarter in advance, and claimed it back against the work he had done in the mean time. We know from the *Lyttelton Times* references that Wilson had been operating a nursery on the site since mid September the previous year anyway, which no doubt accounts for this. A paper trail was being kept, but this seems to have been purely for the sake of appearances. Brittan’s response to Wilson’s request to have the deposit cleared was not only accepted, but suggests, rather strongly, that Wilson had been actually *living* on the site rent free since mid 1851, i.e. before the nursery was publicly advertised. On 11 June 1852 Brittan wrote to Wilson:

I have to inform you that your claim for a deduction of Rent, to the extent promised for the three acres of land prepared for cultivation in the Botanical Gardens will be allowed. I am preparing an Agreement for your tenancy of the House you occupy during the ensuing year at the rate of £4.15.0 per Annum. As soon as it is ready I will give you notice to call at this Office to sign it. I have further to inform you that Godley has decided on charging you £4. for the period of your tenancy to the present time.<sup>95</sup>

That is to say Wilson was to pay nearly a year’s worth of back rent, implying he had lived there before his nursery opened, on rather favourable terms. Furthermore, the house rented by Wilson fronted onto Oxford Terrace, and had been ‘lately in the occupation of the Canterbury Association’s Surveyors’.<sup>96</sup> This link is significant, as Edward Jollie, the Association’s Surveyor, had noted that while he was undertaking the survey, ‘I lived in Scrogg’s grass house [added later: at ‘The Bricks’] and the six men [added later: who were with me] occupied a weatherboard house of one room about 40 yards off’.<sup>97</sup> Thus it is clear that Wilson occupied either Jollie’s house or, more likely, that of his workers. From exactly this point, therefore, the ‘Botanical Gardens’ were first surveyed, and the Christchurch settlement’s plant productions were generated. The Canterbury Association, in the person of John Robert Godley, was desperate to install a gardener on public land to establish a plant nursery to facilitate the creation of settler gardens. Only once Wilson started making money was he charged anything.

Wilson certainly did not disappoint Godley; his advertisements show a wide range of edible

<sup>93</sup> Wilson to Land Office, 7 June 1852, CH290, Item 6/8 1495, *ANZCRO*

<sup>94</sup> CH290, 7/7 b2 Item 11, Folder D, *ANZCRO*

<sup>95</sup> Brittan to Wilson, 11 June 1852, CH290, Item 5/1 64/52, *ANZCRO*

<sup>96</sup> ‘Memorandum of Agreement’, 1 June 1852, CH290, 7/7 b2 Item 8 Folder D, *ANZCRO*

<sup>97</sup> Jollie, *Recollections*, p.67-68; a slightly altered quotation is given in “‘The Bricks’: An Historic Christchurch Landmark”, *CB*, August 1935, p.9

crops available, so that, even in his first advertisement he had a ‘large Collection of Choice VEGETABLE SEEDS comprising Blue Scimitar and Bishop’s early Dwarf Peas, Green Windsor Beans, Globe Onion, Carrots, Parsnips, Turnips, Celery, Parsley, Asparagus, &C, &C. A portion of Red and White Clover, Perennial Ryegrass, Cocksfoot and a variety of other Grasses. A quantity of Furze seed, and Acacia or “Green Wattle”, suitable for Fencing and Shelter. Seeds of Larch, Fir, Scotch Fir, Spruce Fir, and other European Trees and Shrubs. Trees of Ribstone Pippin Apple, Kentish Cherry, Green Gage Plum, and Brown Turkey Fig. A few hundreds of Asparagus and Rhubarb plants...’<sup>98</sup> Three weeks later he advertised that he had ‘1000 FRUIT TREES... 900 Red and White Currants. 3000 Thorns. 500 Giant Asparagus Roots. 60 Victoria Rhubarb Roots. 10lb White Globe Onion Seed. 3 bushels Dwarf Peas and Beans.’ No flowers were mentioned.<sup>99</sup> In early December Wilson was still advertising only edible varieties: ‘CABBAGE PLANTS &C’ in bold type. ‘5,000 Early YORK CABBAGE. 5,000 Early Sugar Loaf do. 100 Red Pickling do... 3,000 Green Curled Savoy, 2,000 Cauliflower, 2,000 Early White Cape Brocoli, 2,000 Grange’s White do. 1,000 Cabbage and Cos Lettuce, 1,000 Green Curled Endive.’<sup>100</sup> Wilson’s excellence with brassicas earned him the nickname ‘Cabbage’ Wilson. Indeed, it seems that thirteen acres of his garden were in cabbages.<sup>101</sup>



**Figure 5: William Wilson**

**Source: Canterbury Pilgrims and Early Settlers Association, Ref: 1949.148.244, CM**

<sup>98</sup> *LT*, 13 September 1851

<sup>99</sup> *LT*, 4 October 1851

<sup>100</sup> *LT*, 13 December 1851

<sup>101</sup> William Wilson, *LT*, 14 August 1852

The following year the *Christchurch Guardian and Canterbury Advertiser* ran a series of gardening and farming columns by Wilson ‘specially prepared for the Guardian’. The *Lyttelton Times* continued them later in 1852. His columns provide good evidence about the crops known to settlers. The emphasis was always on edible crops. In early June, winter, Wilson mentioned only food plants:

The only seeds which can safely be sown are Onions, Radishes, Lettuces, Mustard, and Cress; and within the shelter of a bank or close paling, having a Northern aspect, a few Early Frame or Early Charlton Peas, and Early Mazagan Beans may be sown, with the probability of producing an early and productive crop. Plants of Early Yorks, sown late in Autumn, may now be transplanted, to produce early spring cabbages. Plants of Cauliflowers, sown at the same date, should now be fit for transplanting, and will produce Cauliflowers vastly superior to those sown in Spring and planted out at mid-summer. Asparagus and Rhubarb roots may be planted, the former in rows, eighteen inches wide, and nine inches in the row; and the latter, in rows thirty inches distant, and eighteen inches apart, and both may be immediately mulched with manure. The sets of Potato Onions may now be planted in beds, 3 ½ feet wide, with four rows in each bed, and nine inches from set to set.<sup>102</sup>

He also urged planting of edible crops in a difficult environment, particularly one lacking adequate shelter from fierce winds:

The present is also the best month of the year for planting Fruit Trees... [T]he trees should not have more than twelve inches of a stem, tall stemmed trees being utterly unsuited to the character of the climate and to the present absence of shelter. The Espalier mode of training will be the likeliest to enable Fruit Trees to withstand the winds; the next best and earliest method will be Hoop-training, which is effected by placing a strong wooden hoop, nine inches in diameter, in the centre a young tree [sic], and securing, at regular intervals, the branches to it; another hoop, nine inches above the first, may be introduced; a third, nine inches above the second, and so on, as the tree progresses, each successive hoop expanding six inches in diameter, until at five feet, the tree will present the appearance of a spacious cup, its branches incapable of being shook individually, and the tree in its entirety presenting a statue-like stiffness under the strongest breezes.<sup>103</sup>

The same article recommended the planting of gooseberries, currants and raspberries. The July article confined itself to instruction on potatoes, peas and beans.<sup>104</sup> In August, Wilson suggested dwarf peas over tall varieties due to ‘the high winds of midsummer and the scarcity of Pea-stakes’.<sup>105</sup>

Flowers appear in both the August and September articles, but not to any great extent. In the

<sup>102</sup> William Wilson, ‘Calendar of Garden and Farm Operations for June’, *CGCA*, 3 June 1852

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> William Wilson, ‘Calendar of Garden and Farm Operations for July’, *CGCA*, 8 July 1852

<sup>105</sup> William Wilson, ‘Calendar of Garden and Farm Operations for August’, *CGCA*, 5 August 1852



August column, of nine paragraphs six were dedicated to vegetables, one to fruit and one to flowers. The remaining paragraph deserves quotation because it introduced the idea of judgement, a theme to be followed throughout this thesis.

The return of August—the first month of Spring, and the prospect of a Horticultural Exhibition, are mutually suggestive of the numerous Gardening duties which the present month imposes; for they who would secure the superior advantages afforded by early cropping, as well as they who would endeavour to maintain the fertile character of the Canterbury Plain—by exhibiting its choicest vegetable productions at the forthcoming exhibition—must each consider that they have no time to lose; that *immediate* planting and sowing are essential to secure in high perfection most of our Fruits, Flowers and Vegetables, by the 16<sup>th</sup> December—the anniversary of our Settlement.<sup>106</sup>

This passage emphasises the idea of gardening as a duty, and that the environment was naturally fecund. That the exhibition of the best vegetable productions was to mark the second anniversary of the first of the First Four Ships coming to Lyttelton shows how gardening and civic duty were enmeshed even at this early date in public discourse.

The September column is most useful in showing the seeds available to gardeners: as a nurseryman Wilson was unlikely to promote varieties he could not himself supply. Vegetables included onions, carrots, parsnips, turnips, cabbages, cauliflowers, Savoys, Brussels sprouts, ‘Curled Kail, or Borecole’, spinach, curled cress, mustard, radishes, lettuces, peas and beans, beetroot, flowering broccoli and celery. The roots of asparagus, sea kale, horseradish, and globe and Jerusalem artichokes could be moved safely. An extensive list of herbs suggested parsley, summer savoury, sweet marjoram, sweet basil, bush basil, marigolds, thyme, sage, winter savory, pot marjoram, balm, borage, spearmint, peppermint, hyssop, lavender, and ‘such Medicinal herbs as Rosemary, Feverfew, Penny-royal, Chamomile, and Horehound.’ Of flowers, mignonette and sweet peas could be sown, and later, balsams, nasturtiums and ‘*Convolvulus Major*<sup>107</sup> may also be sown with safety.’ Roses, fuchsias, hollyhocks, dahlias, chrysanthemums, pinks, carnations could all be planted, ‘and the many other varieties of Biennial, and Perennial Herbaceous flowering plants, of which the settlement, young though it is, already contains a very creditable collection.’<sup>108</sup> The previous month, the list of fruit suggested for planting was equally impressive: apples, pears, plums, cherries, peaches, nectarines, figs, gooseberries, currants, raspberries and strawberries were all apparently

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> NB: this was probably a reference to *Ipomoea purpurea* (morning glory) and not *Convolvulus arvensis*, later to become the bane of Christchurch gardeners. The pre-Linnaean name *Convolvulus Major* referred to morning glory.

<sup>108</sup> William Wilson, ‘Calendar of Garden and Farm Operations for September, CGCA., 2 September 1852

available.<sup>109</sup> Again, the emphasis was on useful plants: mostly edible, some medicinal, and some decorative. Wilson's major thrust was towards promoting economic gardening in a fertile, though very windy environment.

Through the garden Wilson became a public personality, as garden columnist in both the *Guardian* and the *Lyttelton Times*,<sup>110</sup> and by 1857 he was the wealthiest man in Christchurch. He later became a councillor and, in 1868, was elected the city's first mayor. Wilson's Botanical Gardens venture ended in 1856, when the Town Reserves listed on Jollie's original 'Plot of Christchurch' were sold off by the Crown to meet Canterbury Association debts. In 1868, coincidentally the same year Wilson became Mayor, Hakopa te Ata o Tu, a Ngai Tuahuriri rangatira, lodged a claim at the Native Land Court regarding Otautahi.<sup>111</sup> He said that as the site was a mahinga kai, it was not included in Kemp's Purchase. His claim was dismissed because the Crown had already sold the land.<sup>112</sup> Wilson's garden at Otautahi was therefore a palimpsest, in which the resources of the site remained constant but their form, and those who had access, changed dramatically.<sup>113</sup>

### First Christchurch Gardens

Personal records of some of the earliest Christchurch gardens are extant, and highlight the importance of food production. Several of these, including Putaringamotu and Otautahi, already mentioned, were on former mahinga kai, so changes in land use can be examined. Charles Bridge established Opawha Farm at Opawaho in 1850, and gave a good, though brief account of his gardening work for 1852. Significantly, all references to the garden involved food crops. '[P]lanted gooseberry trees [sic], and put in a row of peas';<sup>114</sup> '... put some early potatoes in from England';<sup>115</sup> 'Planted onions';<sup>116</sup> 'Wilson and I sowed carrots, onions, beans... and radishes';<sup>117</sup> 'put in celery, brocoli seeds [sic]';<sup>118</sup> Bridge later won a prize for

<sup>109</sup> William Wilson, 'Calendar of Garden and Farm Operations for August, *CGCA*, 5 August 1852

<sup>110</sup> See, for example, Wilson, 'Calendar of Garden and Farm Operations for October', *LT*, 9 October 1852; Wilson, 'Calendar of Garden and Farm Operations for November', *LT*, 30 October 1852; Wilson, 'Calendar of Garden and Farm Operations for December', *LT*, 4 December 1852

<sup>111</sup> Maori Land Court Ikaroa District South Island Minute Book, Vol. 1B, p.54, *CCL*

<sup>112</sup> Te Maire Tau, Anake Goodall, David Palmer and Rakihia Tau, *Te Whakatau Kaupapa: Ngai Tahu Resource Management Strategy for the Canterbury Region* (Wellington, 1992); Alexander Mackay, *A Compendium of Official Documents Relative to Native Affairs in the South Island*, Vol. 2 (Nelson, 1872), p. 208

<sup>113</sup> See also Matt Morris, 'Cabbage Wilson's Garden: Overwriting Indigenous Space in Christchurch, New Zealand, 1850-1856', in Alex Gerbas and Robyn Mayes (eds), *Palimpsests: Transforming Communities* (Perth, 2005), pp. 95-107

<sup>114</sup> Charles Bridge, *Diary 1850-1865*, 2 July 1852, ARCH 205, *CCL*

<sup>115</sup> Bridge, 29 July 1852, ARCH 205, *CCL*

<sup>116</sup> Bridge, 8 August 1852, ARCH 205, *CCL*

<sup>117</sup> Bridge, 2 September 1852, ARCH 205, *CCL*

his potatoes.

John Cracroft Wilson's farm Cashmere extended to 108 hectares.<sup>119</sup> The swamplands where he erected his house were known to Ngai Tahu as Omokihi, a mahinga kai and settlement. Wilson arrived in 1854 from India, and named his estate after his favourite summer retreat: 'he spent his leaves up there in the mountains [of Kashmir], and they loved it, so that's why he called this home Cashmere'.<sup>120</sup> Flax and fern were uprooted, and grain sowed.<sup>121</sup> Observing Canterbury from his home he saw India: 'to the North, is a plain very like the Moradabad Terrace without its Mango Groves', although the Papanui and Riccarton forest remnants resembled these.<sup>122</sup> His garden experiments were certainly informed by Indian experience. 'The Himalayan Rhododendron is doing well', but other imports were less successful.

The bamboos supplied by Dr. Falconer of the Calcutta Botanical garden were alive in Christchurch, but the flood killed them in the verandah of my house. The small hill Bamboo (Nigala) all died in consequence of the fracture of the glass of the Ward's case in which they were growing.<sup>123</sup>

He enlisted the help of William Wilson, 'the Gardener and Florist', in propagating bamboo seeds, but without success. The loss of 'the large hill Bamboo seeds... caused me more vexation than all my other losses in the horticultural line.' Likewise, none of his Rohilkhund Bamboo seed germinated, though it was 'distributed to many persons and I sowed some myself'.<sup>124</sup> There was some hope, however.

In my own garden almost all of the seeds used in an Indian Curry germinated and I believe that they will come to maturity.  
We have not tried ginger, but I think the plant might succeed on a sheltered slope on the hill forming the Southern boundary of my Freehold Land.<sup>125</sup>

He planted trees, as well, including Bhutan cypresses, pines for shelter (one of his special concerns) and a blue gum,<sup>126</sup> now an enormous landmark. John Cracroft Wilson's garden at Cashmere, from this impression, was therefore not entirely centred on food production. He showed a marked concern for decorative plants. The rhododendrons were an important

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<sup>118</sup> Bridge, 23 September 1852, ARCH 205, CCL

<sup>119</sup> Gordon Ogilvie, *The Port Hills of Christchurch* (Wellington, 1978), p.163

<sup>120</sup> Felicity Aitken, interviewed 6 February 2006

<sup>121</sup> John Cracroft Wilson, p.46

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p.28

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p.47

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., pp.47-48

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p.48

<sup>126</sup> Felicity Aitken, interviewed 6 February 2006

inclusion; later they were utilised by Edgar Stead at Ilam. Of the other plants he mentioned in his *Reminiscences*, it is possible that he had some use in mind for the bamboos, which he believed would be ‘perfectly invaluable in New Zealand’,<sup>127</sup> although he did not specify why. The trees were obviously necessary to provide shelter, but the cypresses seem to be a nostalgic touch. It is unlikely that he did not produce vegetables in his garden – he noted that ‘Every description of English vegetable grows well in Christchurch’ – but because he had Indian servants doing most of the work, unlike the Deanses, William Wilson and Charles Bridge, he had more leisure to focus on specimens and curiosities that reminded him of home. Indeed, a class division of gardening interests is apparent.

J. Stanley Monck settled in the Redcliffs area (Rae Kura) at what became Moncks Bay. His diary gives a lot of detail of gardening work over a period of six years between 1869 and 1875. Again his primary emphasis was on edible crops, although flowerbeds featured from 1871. Gardening was a prominent activity of Monck’s throughout this period. In July 1869, for example, his work involved the following: ‘14 Put in early potatoes. 15 Making culvert for ditch in garden. 16 Filling up ditch through garden... 19 put grass seed in one bed in garden 20-21<sup>st</sup> making new strawberry bed etc. 22 ditto... 23 Gardening... 26 Sowed peas, boiled potatoes. 27 Drove to town brought back rhubarb roots and cabbage plants. sowed turnips. 28 Sowed grass seed in garden. boiled potatoes. 29 Digging in garden... 30 Gardening’.<sup>128</sup> Thus dealing with drainage, establishing fruit and vegetables and, to a limited extent, sowing what appears to have been a lawn were the priorities of the month. Later in the year he sowed pumpkins<sup>129</sup> and peas<sup>130</sup>, harvested strawberries<sup>131</sup> and cherries<sup>132</sup> and dug the potatoes for Christmas.<sup>133</sup> Initial work was therefore economic work.

By 1871 Monck could spend time on beautifying his garden. He made flowerbeds in April and October of that year.<sup>134</sup> In November, he noted ‘mowing grass in garden... 22 drove to town bought [sic] back rose trees’.<sup>135</sup> He planted blue gums in April 1872,<sup>136</sup> made paths by the house and sowed Cape broom seed ‘round wife’s garden’ in 1873,<sup>137</sup> put in a fence around

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<sup>127</sup> John Cracroft Wilson, p.48

<sup>128</sup> J. Stanley Monck, *Diary*, July 1869, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>129</sup> Monck, 17 August 1869, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>130</sup> Monck, 25 August 1869, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>131</sup> Monck, 30 October 1869, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>132</sup> Monck, 28 November 1869, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>133</sup> Monck, 4 December, 1869, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>134</sup> Monck, 2, 3 April 1871; 3 October 1871, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>135</sup> Monck, 20 November 1871, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>136</sup> Monck, 29 April 1872, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>137</sup> Monck, 2 July, 1873; 5 September 1873, ARCH 486, CCL

the garden in October 1874<sup>138</sup> and spent part of June 1875 'making out paths etc' in a new patch of garden.<sup>139</sup> For all that, he maintained a level of work in the garden that ensured a considerable degree of self-sufficiency in food. Fruit trees, grape vines and strawberries continued receiving a large amount of attention, while potatoes, rhubarb and currants were occupying ever increasing garden beds into 1875.<sup>140</sup>

Aesthetic improvements wrought by gardeners therefore did have their place. Settler gardening efforts impressed Charlotte Godley, for example. 'If there were ready-made trees, it [Heathcote] would be a beautiful valley,' she wrote in 1852, 'but for the present, there is that great want. Everyone must work at their gardens, and a little bit of green, to make a pretty foreground, would make the whole scene pretty at once.'<sup>141</sup> Again, 'We went along nearly five miles of excellent road into Christchurch, all new since I had been on the Plains, and, much as I had heard, I was very much surprised, and not a little delighted, to see how very much civilized the country had become. There are houses, gardens, and cultivation, in sight all the way along...'<sup>142</sup> John Hall, writing in his diary for August 1852, made similar observations. Like Charlotte Godley he had been pleased by evidence of cultivation as he approached Christchurch, and remarking on Bray's property at Avonhead, felt that it 'will really be a pretty one in a few years'.<sup>143</sup> Indeed, the desire to see a particular kind of aesthetic on their journeys demonstrates the same sort of gaze as that of the later beautifiers, of which Hall was one. As has been shown, however, Charlotte Godley's own gardening efforts were mostly concerned with growing food.

Class therefore appears as a factor in the forms of these early Christchurch gardens. This attitude is also reflected in the gifts brought to the Godleys by their visitors. If colonists (landowners), they brought fruit and vegetables. 'Mr. Tancred... brought me some beans from his garden', 'Mr. Perceval... brought me a bag of French beans, and rhubarb from the garden.' This is in contrast to the gift of 'such a beautiful bouquet' from Tancred's servant, Mrs. Collins. Tancred had given Mr. and Mrs. Collins a little flower garden 'where they have grown all sorts of flowers' after Charlotte Godley and the Cocks' of Harley Street, on hearing Tancred was leaving, had battled for Mrs. Collins' services.<sup>144</sup> In this instance the flower garden of the emigrant was a status symbol of the colonist; its economic uselessness reinforcing Mr. and Mrs. Collins' dependence on Tancred, who chose to grow food in his

<sup>138</sup> Monck, 13-16, 19 October 1874, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>139</sup> Monck, 10 June, 1875, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>140</sup> Monck, 19, 21, 26, 28, 29 June 1875, ARCH 486, CCL

<sup>141</sup> Charlotte Godley to her mother, 14 January 1852, p.287

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., p.288

<sup>143</sup> John Hall, *Diary*, 3 August 1852, ARCH 219, CCL

<sup>144</sup> Charlotte Godley, 14 January 1852, p.292

own garden.

John Cracroft Wilson was repulsed by the efforts emigrants put into making their gardens at the expense of working a decent day's work for landowners such as himself.

I may as well state that at the present time, 1854, no labourer in Canterbury thinks of coming to his work before 8 o'clock am or remaining at it after 4 o'clock pm; and it is an ordinary occurrence for a man to get up at 4 o'clock am in the Summer, and work hard for three hours in his own garden or field. Having thus taken, to use a vulgar phrase, the shine out of himself for his own benefit, he works listlessly enough, for his Employers for 8 hours; and then he returns to his home and gives his own garden or field the benefit of two additional hours' good hard labour – And for this half and half kind of service rendered, he expects nothing under 5 shillings per diem.<sup>145</sup>

The enthusiasm for using the garden under these conditions as a means to an 'independency', as Fairburn argued, ensured that for most gardening had a primarily economic function.

Most gardens existed to supply the house with vegetables and not to serve any nostalgic function. Brittan's garden, not far from William Wilson's nursery, was sheltered by hawthorn and furze plants.

The kitchen garden... displays an abundance of vegetables and fruit trees of many kinds, besides a few willows and wattles. All the vegetables have succeeded to perfection here: there could not be finer potatoes, cabbages, turnips, onions, carrots, and parsnips; celery also flourishes. Peas and beans of several kinds were equally productive in their season.<sup>146</sup>

Tancred's garden, further along the Avon continuing east had a 'small kitchen and flower garden, with a few fruit trees'.<sup>147</sup> As noted above, the kitchen garden and fruit trees were his own, while the flowers were his servant's. Percival's house, still further along, had an acre of cultivated garden, 'full of vegetables of all kinds, and fruit trees'.<sup>148</sup> Two labourers on the properties of Westenra and Wilkinson each had small potato gardens.<sup>149</sup> Conway Rose admitted in 1852 that he had not yet laid out his garden in central Christchurch, but that his vegetable crops were thriving. 'We have plenty of potatoes, turnips, cabbages and beetroot growing round the house.'<sup>150</sup> Robert Bateman Paul in his 1857 *Letters from Canterbury* provided an overview of the successes of early gardeners:

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<sup>145</sup> John Cracroft Wilson, p.28

<sup>146</sup> 'The Suburbs of Christchurch', *LT*, 17 April, 1852

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> Rose, p.7

Notwithstanding the exposed situation of the town, with no natural shelter either from wind or frost, the first settlers have contrived (by sowing gorse and quick, the Australian blue gum, the broom, and other hardy shrubs, and, as a temporary shelter, the mallow) to obtain a very tolerable protection for their fruit trees and flowers. One garden (Mr. Barker's) has produced this year 200 fine peaches from standard trees, and another (Mr. F. Thompson's) some bunches of out-of-door grapes. Strawberries, currants, and gooseberries are beginning to be tolerably abundant. Most of the gardens are also well supplied with peas, beans, lettuces, brocoli, [sic] and other vegetables.<sup>151</sup>

There was a general desire to see the city looking attractive, but the efforts of most gardeners were on creating gardens abundant with food crops.

The efforts of these gardeners were eulogised by the founder of systematic colonisation, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, when he came out to visit the new town in 1853. To women he wrote that the 'neighbourhood is beauty itself',<sup>152</sup> and remarked on the 'beauty and natural fertility' of both Canterbury and Wellington;<sup>153</sup> to his friend Rintoul it was the vegetables he remarked upon: 'vegetables at Canterbury were finer than I have ever seen before'.<sup>154</sup> His ideas were being rolled out more or less according to plan. If, as Cookson has put it, Captain Thomas's first map of Canterbury 'may be regarded as the first step of the process whereby Ngai Tahu were put 'out of sight, out of mind',<sup>155</sup> and therefore Jollie's 'Plot of Christchurch' as another step, the gardens might be regarded as the first tangible reconstruction of Maori space. As found by Katie Holmes and Katherine Raine, gardens, like maps, emerge as tools in the colonising process.<sup>156</sup>

### **The Horticultural Society and Garden Produce Exhibitions**

As previously stated, mentions of a Horticultural Society in Christchurch surfaced as early as March 1851, and this organisation seemed to be behind the establishment of William Wilson's plant nursery in the first Botanic Gardens. In turn Wilson used his *Guardian* column to promote the Horticultural Society's Produce Exhibition, held on 16 December 1852 to

<sup>151</sup> Robert B. Paul, *Letters from Canterbury* (London, 1857), pp.58-59

<sup>152</sup> Edward Gibbon Wakefield to Catherine Wakefield, 24 March 1853, J. R. Godley and E. G. Wakefield Correspondence, Box 1, Vol. 1, p. 248, 475/50, *CM*

<sup>153</sup> Edward Gibbon Wakefield to Henrietta Rintoul, 25 March 1853, J. R. Godley and E. G. Wakefield Correspondence, Box 1, Vol. 1, p.251, 475/50, *CM*

<sup>154</sup> Edward Gibbon Wakefield to Robert Rintoul, 16 April 1853, J. R. Godley and E. G. Wakefield Correspondence, Box 1, Vol. 1, p.254, 475/50, *CM*

<sup>155</sup> John Cookson, 'Towards a City Biography', in Cookson and Dunstall (eds), p.354

<sup>156</sup> Katie Holmes, '“I have built up a little garden”: The Vernacular Garden, National Identity and a Sense of Place', *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes*, Vol.21, No.2, 2001; Katherine Raine, 'Domesticating the Land: Colonial Women's Gardening', in Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum (eds), *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History* (Auckland, 2000)

celebrate the anniversary of the settlement. I have proposed the existence of a close relationship between the Canterbury Association and the Horticultural Society, also called variously the Horticultural and Agricultural Society, and the Botanical Society. John Robert Godley's interest in securing Wilson on the public land, and housing him rent-free there despite the conditions of the formal lease is evidence for such a relationship.

Further evidence of Godley's personal interest in promoting gardening in the new colony is revealed in a notice regarding a meeting of the Botanical Society placed in the *Guardian* in July 1852 in which it was proposed that the society in future be called The Christchurch Agricultural, Botanical and Horticultural Society. The meeting elected Godley president. Brittan was to be treasurer, and the Rev. Mathias and J. C. Porter to be secretaries.<sup>157</sup> Indeed, as early as June 1850, well before any colonists had arrived, Edward Gibbon Wakefield had written to Godley saying 'I am sure you will have a fine horticultural show on the first anniversary...'<sup>158</sup> This did not of course eventuate until the second anniversary. The Canterbury Association as manifested in Christchurch effectively was the Horticultural Society, even if Godley was equivocal about the Association back in England by this time. In fact, Edward Jerningham Wakefield, Edward Gibbon's son and formerly his secretary, was on the management committee.<sup>159</sup> Ten years earlier he had been involved in the Wellington Horticultural and Botanical Society,<sup>160</sup> again demonstrating how existing colonial learning helped the Christchurch gardening effort.

Soon after the announcement of the renamed society, the horticultural exhibition Godley had long dreamed of was advertised.<sup>161</sup> There were three categories, for fruit, flowers (including native shrubs and flowers) and vegetables, the last of these also including potherbs, native grasses and, oddly enough, honey in the comb.<sup>162</sup> In the fruit category, the well-established Deans estate at Riccarton took the firsts for all varieties offered: strawberries (despite their difficulty in growing them), gooseberries, currants and cherries. The vegetable category was more evenly dispersed. Deans won for peas and old potatoes, William Wilson for broad beans, carrots, onions, a basket of salad and native grasses (which seemed to have switched category), and Charles Bridge of Opawha for new potatoes. Brittan won for cabbages and cauliflowers, Watts Russell at Ilam won for cucumbers, Puckle for turnips, Laine for lettuces

<sup>157</sup> 'Botanical Society', *CGCA*, 1 July 1852

<sup>158</sup> Wakefield to Godley, 22 June 1850, J. R. Godley and E. G. Wakefield Correspondence, Box 1, Vol. 1, p.85, 475/50, *CM*

<sup>159</sup> 'Botanical Society', *CGCA*, 1 July 1852

<sup>160</sup> Helen Leach, *1,000 Years of Gardening in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1984), p.115. Incidentally, surveyor Captain William Mein Smith, produced massive cabbages, Leach, *1,000 Years*, p.114

<sup>161</sup> 'Horticultural Exhibition', *CGCA*, 5 August 1852

<sup>162</sup> 'Horticultural Exhibition', *LT*, 7 August 1852



and Brown for pot-herbs.<sup>163</sup> Watts Russell did best in the flowers, winning for roses, pinks, balsams and lobelia. Of the twenty winners across all the categories, only one was a woman, Sarah Johnson for her *Mimulus Muscatus* in the flowers section. Of particular note were Watts Russell's 'very fine' cucumbers, 'the largest measuring 23 inches in length.' Native grasses also caused a stir; William Wilson, already famous in the settlement as a nurseryman, presented twenty-five varieties, which 'excited much attention'.<sup>164</sup>

A second exhibition followed in autumn. This time the focus was more specifically on edible crops, with eleven categories offered.<sup>165</sup> The Deans garden was singled out as it 'furnished some splendid specimens of Apples and Pears,' although 'Peaches from the same garden suffered much from the wet weather.' J. W. Russell's 'fine Cucumbers' were again worthy of mention. Once again, only one woman – Miss Bowen – won a prize: second for onions and third for potatoes.<sup>166</sup> The awarding of prizes for these food productions, not to mention the exhibiting of them for general consumption, was meant to recognise the efforts of these colonists in working in their gardens for the greater good.

By 1865, however, the emphasis of these exhibitions had shifted. 'Cottage garden' flowers – lilliums, hollyhocks, verbenas, geraniums and 'marygolds' – predominated.<sup>167</sup> Fruit was still well represented, and considered by the judges to have been 'particularly good'. Mr. Potts exhibited a basket of thirty-two varieties of fruit; his apples and pears were especially outstanding. Mr. McCormick of Sumner, Mrs. Deans of Riccarton, and Mr. Wilson of Papanui were all winners, the latter impressing with 'some very fine filberts'. Mr. Lance presented some 'very fine tomatoes', an interesting example of the early use of this fruit. McCormick won an extra prize for two bunches of grapes from his hothouse.<sup>168</sup> Abundant food gardens, while celebrated, were by this time being superseded by the desire on behalf of the Horticultural Society to promote aesthetic considerations, a point developed further in Chapter Three.

## Conclusion

This chapter has shown that garden making in early Christchurch was, as might be expected, centred on settler self-provisioning. Implicit in the independence sought by these settlers was

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<sup>163</sup> 'Horticultural Exhibition', *LT*, 25 December 1852

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>165</sup> 'Canterbury Horticultural and Agricultural Society', *LT*, 16 April, 1853

<sup>166</sup> 'Agricultural and Horticultural Exhibition', *LT*, 14 May 1853

<sup>167</sup> 'The Horticultural Exhibition', *The Press*, 10 March 1865

<sup>168</sup> 'The Horticultural Exhibition', *The Press*, 11 March 1865

the desire not to be reliant on local Ngai Tahu communities for food supplies. This supports Katie Holmes' view that garden-making could be an important part of the colonial project, both in terms of over-writing indigenous space and investing it with new meanings and metaphors, but also in the Christchurch example, in terms of depriving them of economic power over the newcomers. Although Maori had been quick to adopt new varieties of food crops from the first Europeans in the area, the new colonial phase from 1850 signalled absolute exclusion and impoverishment as a result of being denied access to traditional mahinga kai. In fact, the European gardens that overwrote abundant mahinga kai here were themselves abundant; 'natural abundance' was improved with hard work. Furthermore, this effort to get settlers cultivating their land immediately was pushed by both the Canterbury Association and by the Christchurch Horticultural Society; indeed the lines between these two organisations seem distinctly blurred.

### 3

## Beauty

### Introduction

While the Horticultural Exhibitions showed signs of shifting focus from self-provisioning towards beauty during the 1860s, and the first home garden competitions were held between 1869 and 1873, little was achieved in terms of civic beautification through home gardening until the turn of the century. Many gardeners, even from the outset of European settlement, did plant flowers and create other decorative features in their gardens, but they considered these as of secondary importance. Important events eroding this perception were the establishment of the Christchurch Beautifying Association in 1897, the International Exhibition of 1906, and the commencement of regular home garden competitions from 1917. After William Wilson's gardening columns ceased in 1853, gardening information was not included in newspapers until the 1880s when the *Press* ran occasional pieces. *The Star* started a regular gardening column in 1893. The *Press* followed suit in 1906. In 1924 *The City Beautiful* started its long life under the auspices first of the Beautifying Association and then the Horticultural Society as the arbiter of gardening fashion in Christchurch. With the popularity of the garden competitions throughout the 1930s, these organisations seemed to be achieving their aims. Of the four major gardening tropes deployed by different organisations in Christchurch, beauty was promoted the most consistently throughout the period from 1850 to the Queen's visit in 1954, and with the greatest effect.

### Ugly Christchurch

Although Edward Gibbon Wakefield effervesced about Christchurch in 1853, Henry Sewell remained far less impressed. 'Christchurch is an odd straggling place', he had written. 'Small wooden buildings with little pretension to regularity, rough wooden palings for enclosures—a few gardens but except at Riccarton bush not a tree near it... Its first appearance is to my eye unattractive.'<sup>1</sup> Similar impressions beset the period up to the turn of the century. When F. R. Rives Jr. visited Christchurch in 1875, he jotted down mixed impressions. The Domain, he

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Sewell, 4 February 1853, in W. David McIntyre (ed.), *The Journal of Henry Sewell 1853-1857* (Christchurch, 1980), p.124

said, had ‘little to be admired’.<sup>2</sup> His thoughts on residential Christchurch were scarcely better. He admitted that ‘Some of the cottages are quite pretty, and owing to their trim hedges give quite a picturesque effect.’<sup>3</sup> His general impression, however, was unfavourable: ‘I took a short jog before dinner and observed the usual ugliness of Christchurch. How the devil people call Chch. a pretty town I can’t understand.’<sup>4</sup> For Rives, both Domain and suburbs were unpleasant. To Rives, at least, little had changed in twenty years. Sewerage became such a problem in the wetland environment, despite many outward signs of ‘progress’, that public health was a serious issue. The bubonic plague scare of 1900 drew comparisons between Christchurch and Pepys’ London.<sup>5</sup> Amongst gardeners, prettification was still a secondary consideration.

Comments about the loveliness of the city must therefore be treated with caution. As shown in the previous chapter, horticultural exhibitions placed decorative elements above fruit and vegetables throughout the 1860s until 1869 when they suddenly declined. At the same time newspaper reports of the exhibitions focussed on the flowers. Indeed, the *Press* report for 1864 referred to the Horticultural Show as a flower show.<sup>6</sup> In 1865, the *Press* description of the exhibits neglected to mention vegetables altogether.<sup>7</sup> In 1872, interest in vegetables had virtually disappeared. A special Woolston sports day was held to celebrate the Thursday half-holiday, and part of the grounds were used for a flower show. William Wilson supplied ‘pines and evergreens’ for decoration. The principal exhibits were of ‘stove and greenhouse plants’, begonias, roses, fuchsias, carnations, picottees, pelargoniums and geraniums. The main Horticultural Society Exhibition for that year continued the trend. There was no vegetables category for amateurs, and a comparatively small fruit section. The lengthy report reflected this: all the flowers were commented on in detail, while foods were scarcely mentioned. New Zealand native plants were given lavish attention, however, a point developed further in Chapter Four. The young Joseph Armstrong, intimately involved with the Christchurch Government Domain, featured in this connexion, as he had done since at least 1864.<sup>8</sup>

Almost unquestionably in relation to this, the editor of the *Press* remarked, in 1872, that the Christchurch Government Domain, established in 1863 immediately to the west of Christchurch between the city and the Deans property at Riccarton, was enjoying a state of

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<sup>2</sup> F. R. Rives, *Jottings on the Spot*, 7 March 1875, ARCH 455, CCL

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Rives, 12 March 1875, ARCH 455, CCL

<sup>5</sup> ‘Editorial’, *The Press*, 30 April 1900

<sup>6</sup> ‘The Horticultural Show’, *The Press*, 1 January 1864

<sup>7</sup> ‘The Horticultural Exhibition’, *The Press*, 11 March 1865

<sup>8</sup> ‘Horticultural Society’s Show’, *The Press*, 1 March 1872; ‘The Horticultural Show,’ *The Press*, 1 January 1864

prosperity. This was encouraging, it was pointedly stated, particularly in view of the fact that Melbourne's far better resourced 'Botanical Gardens' were in a sorry state. As curator, Ferdinand von Mueller was blamed. His obsession with scientific ends, to the detriment of style, was inexcusable.<sup>9</sup> In fact, the *Press* editor's comment about von Mueller at Melbourne should be read not as a comment on the beauty of the Christchurch Domain but as a warning to Armstrong not to continue emulating Mueller, as he and his father, John, the Government Gardener at the Domain, seemed intent on doing. Ultimately, their scientific endeavours caused unresolvable friction, and both resigned over exactly this conflict in 1889.<sup>10</sup> Beautification was increasingly a political issue. In the *Press* report on the autumn show of 1873, the great majority of the nearly two columns were devoted to flowers, with only one sentence given over to a discussion of the vegetables, and one paragraph on fruit.<sup>11</sup>

The Horticultural Society turned its attention from the best home grown produce to the garden itself. Domestic space needed beautifying. The target was the working class, picturesquely called 'cottagers'. It is important to note here the difference between a 'cottage garden' and a 'cottager's' garden, and to understand that while a 'cottager's' garden might be sometimes confusingly referred to as a 'cottage garden', nevertheless it was not one. 'Cottage gardening' was an activity of the British middle classes in the nineteenth century: 'the romantic idyll of the chocolate box'.<sup>12</sup> A 'cottager', in the Christchurch context as had been the case in Britain,<sup>13</sup> was a man who occupied a cottage, that is, a small house. As will be seen, most houses in Christchurch were on sections of quarter of an acre and, from the 1860s, many were on much smaller sections, and most were members of the working class. Therefore, a 'cottager's' garden was a garden of a working class man, and not a genteel affectation of imagined rustic, rural romanticism. Of course, the very notion of a 'cottager's' garden, as opposed to a labourer's garden, or a mechanic's garden, speaks of middle class aspirations for workers. Needless to say, the kinds of gardens it was hoped these so-called 'cottagers' would make were 'cottage gardens'. Cottage garden competitions, just as competitions for cottagers' gardens, were open to all, and it is telling that they were unpopular. However, this theme of the horticultural establishment trying to help workers beautify the suburbs and, thus, the city, persisted through to the end of the period under review.

<sup>9</sup> 'Editorial', *The Press*, 17 January 1872

<sup>10</sup> M. Barnett, H. Gilpin and L. Metcalf (eds), *A Garden Century* (Christchurch, 1963), p.46

<sup>11</sup> 'Horticultural Society's Show', *The Press*, 7 March, 1873

<sup>12</sup> Helen Leach, *Cultivating Myths: Fiction, Fact and Fashion in Garden History* (Auckland, 2000), p.67

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p.64

In 1869, a correspondent called 'Labourer' wrote to the *Press* to describe his transformation from a drunkard to a gardener, and thought that many other slovenly working men might like to do the same. 'Will my fellow working-men try the gardening, and will the wives endeavour to make their homes as attractive for their husbands as possible?'<sup>14</sup> Apparently they did not, as in the first cottage garden competition, held that same year, only six contestants entered, and two of these withdrew due to illness. The winner was Peacock, whose Hawkesbury estate fronted onto Papanui Road in Merivale.<sup>15</sup> It was hardly a true 'cottage' garden. At the horticultural exhibition for 1872, a separate class was made for entries by 'cottage gardeners', but it received only two entries, from the same competitor. This invoked a sharp criticism from the reporter, who unquestionably identified 'cottage gardeners' with the working class:

There is, perhaps, hardly a cottage in Christchurch without plant or stand of plants for the window, and yet not a single entry was made for this class yesterday. Indeed, the whole class, which ought to be amongst the most popular... was but sparsely filled...

After commenting on the popularity of growing and competing with window plants 'at home' (Britain) amongst 'all classes' – but 'in the majority' 'the working classes, artisans and mechanics' – the writer continued:

This, it must be remembered, in a country where the hours of labour are much longer than here, and therefore the leisure time which a man could devote to such an occupation, limited; but there is no excuse...<sup>16</sup>

In 1873, prizes were awarded for 'the best cottager's garden during the season'. Mrs Robertson, of Taylors Lane, Madras Street, won first prize, and Mr Allen, of working-class Addington won second. There were also model flower gardens on display.<sup>17</sup> After this year, however, the competition disappeared, but the point had been made clearly enough: workers needed to start keeping up appearances. The Woolston flower show, celebrating the beautiful productions of an industrial area, was part of the overall strategy. An apparently short-lived rival organisation to the Horticultural Society, calling itself the Horticultural and Arboricultural Society, ran similar exhibitions, with separate classes for 'amateurs and cottagers' in 1875 and 1876.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Labourer, 'Gardening v. Drunkenness', *The Press*, 24 November, 1869

<sup>15</sup> Colin Amodeo, *Wilderness to Garden City* (Christchurch, 2001), p.154

<sup>16</sup> 'Horticultural Society's Show', *The Press*, 1 March 1872

<sup>17</sup> 'Horticultural Society's Show', *The Press*, 7 March 1873

<sup>18</sup> 'Horticultural and Arboricultural Society Autumn Show', *The Press*, 25 February 1875;  
'Horticultural and Arboricultural Society', *The Press*, 24 February 1876

It should be stated that the term ‘amateur’ did not refer to the unskilled, nor did it specifically mean workers. It simply meant non professional gardeners, as professionals needed to compete in a category of their own. However, as I have said, it was hoped workers would compete in the amateur class with the same enthusiasm they supposedly displayed ‘at home’. This was made clear in the comments accompanying the results.

The available categories for competitors are one measure by which the desires of the Horticultural Society for the wider garden populace, and especially of workers, can be measured. If anything, the trend for pushing for beautification had become more evident by 1880. That year the *Press* report on the Horticultural Society’s Autumn Show devoted almost the entire column to discussion of the flowers, and only one sentence to vegetables, despite the fact that for amateurs the same number of categories were available to each.<sup>19</sup> Again a native plant featured, but this time it was a carefully hybridised variegated cabbage tree. In other words a very early interest in native plants, from William Wilson’s native grasses in 1852 to Armstrong’s specimens of the 1860s and 1870s, was now coming under domestication. The report stated of this new cabbage tree that ‘[n]othing could be handsomer for dinner-table decoration, combining as it does the graceful habits of the South Sea Island *Dracaenas* and the *Yucca filamentosa* variegata.’<sup>20</sup> Decorative plants preponderated in the report and, combined, continued to outnumber fruit and vegetables.



**Table 1: Emphasis of Horticultural Exhibitions on Economic and Decorative Elements, 1852-1906**

<sup>19</sup> ‘Christchurch Horticultural Society’, *The Press*, 3 March 1880

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

Categories offered to amateur competitors at these exhibitions varied in number throughout the period. Table 1 above shows the numbers of categories offered each year organised as economic and decorative. The economic categories are made up of vegetables and fruit, while the decorative categories are made up of flowers and pot plants. As the table shows, a decisive turning point occurred in 1864, when decorative categories outnumbered economic for the first time. A reversal occurred in 1869 and 1870, but thereafter, decorative categories outnumbered economic until the 1890s when results became steadily less constant until the Society finally petered out. The reason for the change in 1864 was that this year a separate class was offered for pot plants for the first time. A new range of plants was available for cultivation, and the well-documented Victorian craze for foliage and unusual, rare, and difficult to grow plants became evident. New Zealand native plants were part of this, but also lilies and orchids. Implicit in this was the ability to grow under glass. Between 1873 and 1876 there was no separate amateur class for exhibiting vegetables, emphasising the point that cottagers were to focus on growing pot plants and flowers. They were, however, reintroduced from 1877.

### Section Sizes

As Conway Rose remarked in 1852, Christchurch had been laid out in quarter acre sections, but many people were spread over more than one of these. He had six conjoined sections in central Christchurch, making an acre and a half.<sup>21</sup> By 1864, when the attention of the Horticultural Society turned to the beautification of workers' gardens, the city of Christchurch had a population of 6438, and 1349 dwellings. From 60 acres of Christchurch set out in gardens and orchards in 1852, this use of land had swollen to more than 188 acres. In the Avon and Heathcote electorates were another 761 acres.<sup>22</sup> In the central area, increased population made the single quarter acre section a more standard unit for householders.

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<sup>21</sup> Conway Rose, 'Account of the Canterbury Settlement New Zealand', p.8, 207/54, *CM*

<sup>22</sup> *Statistics of New Zealand for 1864, Including a Census of the Colony, Taken in December of that Year*, Part One, Number 24





**Figure 6: DP 420, Subdivision of RS 300 and 301, 1879, showing early standardisation of the quarter acre section**  
**Source: LINZ**

Subdivisions close by reflected the trend. As the Linwood estate was subdivided from 1879, for example, the standard measure remained the quarter acre, or one rood (see Figure 6).<sup>23</sup> A later subdivision of 1887 slightly to the north, taking in Brittan's property, shows the same pattern, although some properties were more than one rood. The largest was one rood twenty perches.<sup>24</sup> A triangle between Linwood Avenue, Woodham Street and England Street was subdivided in 1895 in the same way.<sup>25</sup> When a larger subdivision occurred west of Linwood Avenue in 1899, however, most of the sections were surveyed at two roods (half an acre). One, at the north eastern extremity, was more than three roods.<sup>26</sup>

Much of the expansion of Christchurch in the earliest decades, however, was to the south of the city boundaries, 'by those who wanted to create gracious homes with enough land on which to make large gardens, and to keep cows and horses.'<sup>27</sup> Henry Sewell, initially so disparaging of Christchurch, purchased the 150 acres that became Addington in 1853, and sold it in quarter acre lots in 1856.<sup>28</sup> Close by, Henry Gordon bought the 300 acre RS 79, and sold it to Edward Gibbon Wakefield in 1852; it was later broken into smaller parcels by his

<sup>23</sup> DP 420, Subdivision of RS 300 and 301, 1879, LINZ

<sup>24</sup> DP 871, Subdivision of RS 10 and 30, 1887 LINZ

<sup>25</sup> DP 1252, Subdivision of RS 326, 1895, LINZ

<sup>26</sup> DP 1532, 1899, LINZ

<sup>27</sup> New Zealand Federation of University Women, Canterbury Branch, *Sydenham: the Model Borough of Old Christchurch: An Informal History* (Christchurch, 1977), p.12

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7

son Edward Jerminham.<sup>29</sup> John Hall purchased the fifty acre RS 13 off the Rev. G. Poulson in 1859.<sup>30</sup> William Wilson at one stage owned a property of thirteen acres on Brougham Street.<sup>31</sup> His house (built in 1858) and front garden show his interest by the 1890s in Loudon-style planting of unusual specimens into the front lawn,<sup>32</sup> although Loudon's 'gardenesque' ideas had first been expressed in 1832.<sup>33</sup>

The railway through Woolston and Sydenham to Addington from Lyttelton, completed in 1867, signalled industrialisation and workers' suburbs. Work on the railway commenced in 1860, but the labourers imported to do most of the work began arriving in 1863. They sought out small sections on which they quickly erected 'simple two-roomed cottages, after the English fashion fenced with gorse'.<sup>34</sup> Gorse became an early problem in the area; by the late 1870s the Sydenham Borough Council was sending countless letters to property owners about the gorse nuisance, requiring attention.<sup>35</sup> An 1863 subdivision for the Sydenham area shows a plethora of quarter acre sections.<sup>36</sup> The 1875 Addington subdivision showed most lots being slightly larger than one rood.<sup>37</sup> Larger properties were still available. Figure 7 shows a spacious Sydenham garden with a large lawn. In Addington, a half acre property with a commodious nine-roomed house was on sale in 1875, with an artesian well, 'pleasure garden', 'choice trees', shrubs and a greenhouse.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p.12

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p.7

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p.59

<sup>32</sup> Charles Quest-Ritson, *The English Garden: A Social History* (London, 2001), p.178

<sup>33</sup> 'Gardenesque' Exhibition, *SLV*, Melbourne, 2004-2005

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p.15

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, Town Clerk letters to property owners in 1878, Sydenham Borough Council Outwards Letterbook, 1877-1879, pp.192, 210-217, 526-528, CH 350, Item 3/1, *ANZCRO*

<sup>36</sup> DP 2, Subdivision of RS 79, 1863, *LINZ*

<sup>37</sup> DP 63, Subdivision of RS 72, 1875, *LINZ*

<sup>38</sup> *The Press*, 25 January 1875



**Figure 7: Marks Family House, Sydenham**

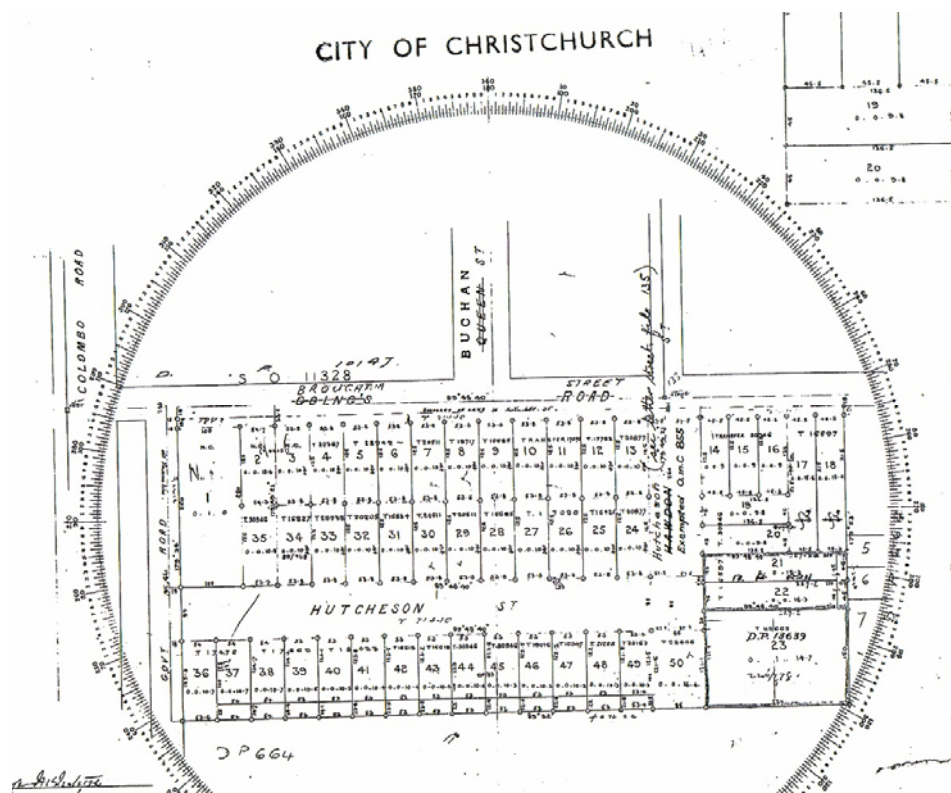
**Source: Marks Collection, Canterbury Historical Association Collection, Ref: 2000.198.97, CHAC97, CM**

Such was hardly the standard, however. Indeed, only two properties in the 1875 plan were more than two roods. Slightly to the north, within the City of Christchurch, lots off Bath Street the same year were twelve and thirteen perches only: slightly more than 1/16<sup>th</sup> of an acre.<sup>39</sup> In 1881, sections south of Brougham Street were even smaller: ten perches and less (Figure 8).<sup>40</sup> The railway workers in Sydenham Borough had peat soils and excellent water, and grew fruit and vegetables.<sup>41</sup> Their sudden appearance from 1863 helps explain the equally sudden interest of the Horticultural Society in workers' gardens.

<sup>39</sup> DP 53, Subdivision of Town Reserve 143, 1875, *LINZ*

<sup>40</sup> DP 544, Subdivision of South of Brougham Street, 1881, *LINZ*

<sup>41</sup> New Zealand Federation of University Women, *Sydenham*, p.15



**Figure 8: DP 544, Subdivision South of Brougham Street, 1881, sections of ten perches and less**  
**Source: LINZ**

Although a Woolston Flower Show had been held as early as 1872, Sydenham's horticultural shows did not commence until the early 1880s. In 1882 the autumn Sydenham horticultural show had a special cottager's class.<sup>42</sup> The summer shows of the Sydenham Horticultural Society featured 'carnations, picotees, and goosberries'. In 1883 the fruit class had nine categories for gooseberries and one for raspberries.<sup>43</sup> The following year carnations and gooseberries were again the focus, though roses, antirrhinums and red currants were allowed as well.<sup>44</sup> The 1885 show was larger again, 'the fruit competition being especially keen'.<sup>45</sup> While the competition expanded, vegetables were not included. The same year, only three categories for vegetables were allowed in the Christchurch Horticultural Society's autumn show, with 17 for cut flowers and 14 for pot plants.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, the later chrysanthemum shows of the Horticultural Society were in truth flower and fruit shows.<sup>47</sup> Chrysanthemum culture, incidentally, could be front page news, as it was in 1895.<sup>48</sup> Even in Sydenham, where gooseberries were celebrated, the flowers predominated. The shows focussed on and

<sup>42</sup> 'Autumn Sydenham Show', *The Press*, 11 March 1882

<sup>43</sup> 'Sydenham Horticultural Society', *The Press*, 3 January 1883

<sup>44</sup> 'Sydenham Horticultural Society', *The Press*, 4 January 1884

<sup>45</sup> 'Sydenham Horticultural Society', *The Press*, 7 January 1885

<sup>46</sup> 'The Horticultural Show', *The Press*, 6 March 1885

<sup>47</sup> 'Chrysanthemum Show', *The Star*, 11 May 1893

<sup>48</sup> 'The Chrysanthemum', *The Star*, 11 February 1895

attempted to foster an idea of beauty over utility, a complete turnaround from the initial years of settlement.

As Table 1 shows, the number of categories offered in the Christchurch Horticultural Society shows diminished towards the end of the 1890s. Colin Amodeo has documented the internal disputes of the Society, and the pressure it felt from rival societies, particularly from the Rose Society and the Chrysanthemum Society, both formed in 1894.<sup>49</sup> In 1897, the Christchurch Horticultural Society held no exhibition; it had dissolved the previous year. The Rose Society decided to try to restart the organisation with the help of the Chrysanthemum Society in 1897.<sup>50</sup> The reformed Society failed to attract much attention: its exhibitions for 1898 and 1899 offered few categories for amateur gardeners, and it held none in 1900 or 1901. It held an exhibition in 1902 at Elmwood where Mrs Rhodes presented prizes; Robert Heaton Rhodes, society President, was away fighting in the South African War at the time.<sup>51</sup> Only seven categories were offered for competition, and all for cut flowers and pot plants. The following year was not much better: eighteen categories were on offer by the new Canterbury United Horticultural Society.<sup>52</sup> Indeed, it appears there were no further exhibitions until 1906. The shows held by the Addington Horticultural Society 1897-1900 were, by contrast, most successful.<sup>53</sup>

No doubt one problem plaguing the new society was the continued existence of the competing Rose and Chrysanthemum Societies. The Canterbury United Horticultural Society of 1903 was another attempt to bring together the disparate groupings under one organisation,<sup>54</sup> and is the undisputed ancestor of the present day Canterbury Horticultural Society. Within one year its membership had climbed to 160, in 1906 it was 215 and in 1907 it was 230.<sup>55</sup>

## Garden City

Despite these attempts, and a desire to be better than its nearest metropolis, Melbourne, Christchurch resisted branding along the lines of 'Marvellous Melbourne' – entrenched in the

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<sup>49</sup> Amodeo, *Wilderness*, p.36

<sup>50</sup> 'Rose Society', *The Press*, 12 March 1897

<sup>51</sup> 'Canterbury Horticultural Society', *The Press*, 21 February 1902

<sup>52</sup> 'Horticultural Show', *The Press*, 6 March 1903

<sup>53</sup> 'Addington Horticultural Society', *The Press*, 5 March 1897; 'Horticultural Show', *The Press*, 4 March 1898; 'Addington Horticultural Society', *The Press*, 3 March 1899; 'Addington Horticultural Society', *The Press*, 2 March 1900. See also Amodeo, *Wilderness*, p.42

<sup>54</sup> Canterbury United Horticultural Society Minutes, 13 July 1903, CHS Minute Books, unnumbered volume (1903-1908), *CHS*

<sup>55</sup> First Annual Report of the Canterbury United Horticultural Society, 13 June 1904, CHS Minute Books, unnumbered volume (1903-1908); 'Canterbury Horticultural Society', unlabeled newspaper cutting pinned to minutes for 1907, CHS Minute Books, unnumbered volume (1903-1908), *CHS*

1880s – until the International Exhibition of 1906. The ‘Cathedral City’ was a possibility from 1881 when the Cathedral nave was opened for worship, and John Cookson has marked the period from 1880 to 1914 as one of Christchurch’s maturing into ‘English Christchurch’.<sup>56</sup> By 1900, the *Press* could talk about ‘garden-loving Christchurch’,<sup>57</sup> but the title for which Christchurch is most famously known, ‘The Garden City’, did not become popular until the 1920s. The first known reference to Christchurch in this way was Sir John Gorst’s 1906 comment about Christchurch being like an English Garden City when he attended the International Exhibition as the British Representative.<sup>58</sup> Rupert Tipples noted that by 1924 the Mayor of Christchurch reported that Christchurch was generally acknowledged as the Garden City of the Dominion.<sup>59</sup> Councillor Andrews, then Chair of the Reserves Committee, that same year believed that the city’s parks were critical to Christchurch keeping its name of ‘garden city of the Dominion’, and ‘paid tribute to the manner in which the residents looked after their gardens, and thus assisted to make Christchurch so beautiful.’<sup>60</sup>

The horticultural exhibitions had been gradually training the public, and especially ‘cottagers’, to use their gardens for beautification of the city since the 1860s. Different horticultural organisations had begun to appear focussed on suburban areas. The Sydenham Horticultural Society has been mentioned; Merivale, too, had a Horticultural Society in the 1880s.<sup>61</sup> Figure 9 shows a Merivale cottage garden on what was Boundary Road, taken in the 1890s. Lilies line a shell or gravel path to the verandah, over which a creeper climbs, and young cabbage trees are planted in a coarse lawn. Front gardens could look very elegant. In Sydenham, a Johnson Street garden had shell paths and box hedges.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> John Cookson, ‘Pilgrims’ Progress’, in John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall (eds), *Southern Capital: Towards a City Biography* (Christchurch, 2000), pp.14,16

<sup>57</sup> ‘The Garden in Literature’, *The Press*, 10 March 1900

<sup>58</sup> Rupert Tipples, ‘Christchurch – The First Garden City?’, *Horticulture in New Zealand*, Vol.3, No.1, 1992, p.35

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p.30

<sup>60</sup> ‘City Reserves: Annual Inspection’, *The Press*, 13 March 1924

<sup>61</sup> ‘Merivale Horticultural Society’, *The Press*, 12 January 1885

<sup>62</sup> New Zealand Federation of University Women, *Sydenham*, p.85



**Figure 9: Middleton family garden, Boundary Road, Merivale, 1890s**  
**Source: Pip Middleton Private Collection**

Throughout the 1880s and 1890s the *Press* printed occasional extracts from British gardening journals *The Garden*, and *The Gardener's Chronicle*. Very often these notes were about specific garden tasks, such as plant labelling or making a 'fruit room',<sup>63</sup> features, such as pathways,<sup>64</sup> or particular plants.<sup>65</sup> There was no dedicated gardening column in the newspaper, but sporadic 'Garden Notes', usually drawing from these British sources, appeared from 1895, usually, though not always, focussing on flowers. The 'Notes' for 22 February 1895, for example, covered endive, artichokes, strawberries, runner beans, apples and pears, as well as a good deal of information on rose culture.<sup>66</sup> Six days later, however, a much longer 'Notes' was devoted entirely to flowers and greenhouse plants 'intended for decorative purposes'.<sup>67</sup> Spring flowering bulbs, pansies and chrysanthemums all received special write-ups in 1897, and all derived from *The Garden* or *The Gardeners' Chronicle*.<sup>68</sup>

Despite the appearance of these columns from the 1880s – the first since William Wilson's columns of 1852 and 1853 – no dedicated, regular gardening column featured in a Christchurch newspaper until 1893, when *The Star* started running them. These columns were

<sup>63</sup> 'Plant Labelling' and 'The Fruit Room', *The Press*, 25 February 1882

<sup>64</sup> 'Garden Walks', *The Press*, 27 February 1889

<sup>65</sup> 'The New Plants of 1887', *The Press*, 9 March 1888; 'The Hollyhock', *The Press*, 20 February 1891

<sup>66</sup> 'Garden Notes', *The Press*, 22 February 1895

<sup>67</sup> 'Garden Notes', *The Press*, 28 February 1895

<sup>68</sup> 'Garden Notes', *The Press*, 4 March 1897; 'The Propagation of Pansies', *The Press*, 12 February 1897; 'Chrysanthemums', *The Press*, 19 February 1897

usually divided into the four classes the competitions used for judging: kitchen garden (vegetables), fruit, flower garden and the greenhouse (pot plants). Unlike the competitions, the emphasis shifted from week to week, but on a balance, the flower garden and greenhouse got more attention. On 20 May 1893, for example, the columnist only mentioned hedge trimming, forcing seakale and protecting rhubarb in the kitchen garden section. In the flower garden, a lot of work was required: pruning common shrubs, tidying borders, gathering leaves and letting them decompose behind the shrubbery, planting hyacinths, crocuses and snowdrops, and possibly narcissus and anemones. Peonies were mentioned too: they should *not* be planted until spring. Preparation for rose planting with deep trenching was now required. The greenhouse operations were equally detailed: chrysanthemums needed attention. Chinese primulas would require a special potting mix, of leaf mould, sand and old cow manure. Pots of Roman narcissus and Roman hyacinths, crocuses and jonquils would be in bloom soon. Clumps of *Schizostylis coccinea* and *Lycoris radiata* ‘may be lifted from the open border and transferred to the stage in the greenhouse’. Christmas roses needed potting.<sup>69</sup> This level of detail given to decorative features was usual in these columns. Interestingly, if any change in emphasis is to be detected, it was around 1900, when the kitchen garden section became longer, and a section on ‘the vinery’ became more common.

Beauty, nevertheless, was of overriding importance. In particular, roses and chrysanthemums figured prominently. The 1895 report on the Chrysanthemum Show, for example, took up an entire column length.<sup>70</sup> Both of the societies representing these flowers were well reported.<sup>71</sup> This beauty did not necessarily mean an English beauty, however, despite references to British gardening journals. In 1904, the *Press* reported that the chrysanthemum was Japanese,<sup>72</sup> but until the overwhelming coverage of Japan that year – entirely in relation to the Russo-Japanese War – such a link does not appear to have been previously, overtly made. Japanese plants had been suggested for the beautification of Christchurch in 1900,<sup>73</sup> and these gradually seeped into gardening columns. A ‘Japanese’ aesthetic may well have been appreciated, but it does not appear to have been consciously appropriated by many Christchurch gardeners. Unlike ‘native gardens’, for example, there was never to my knowledge a ‘Japanese garden’ section in the garden competitions. Japanese plants, however, were certainly incorporated into gardens, their elegance and delicateness contributing to beautification.

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<sup>69</sup> ‘Work for the Week’, *The Star*, 20 May 1893

<sup>70</sup> ‘Chrysanthemum Show’, *The Press*, 3 May 1895

<sup>71</sup> ‘Chrysanthemum Society’, *The Press*, 16 February 1897; ‘Rose Society’, *The Press*, 2 March 1897

<sup>72</sup> ‘Japan and the Japanese’, *The Press*, 22 February 1904

<sup>73</sup> ‘Gardening All Over the World’, *The Press*, 12 April 1900



From 1897, with the establishment of the Christchurch Beautifying Association, beautification received a major fillip. Following close on the heels of this event was Ebenezer Howard's text on town planning in Britain. Howard set out the main tenets of his 'invention', the 'Garden City', in his 1898 book *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path To Real Reform*, reissued in 1902 as *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*. He imagined what he called a Town-Country Magnet (embodied as a Garden City), which would capture all the best aspects of urban and rural living, with none of their associated problems. 'Human society and the beauty of nature are meant to be enjoyed together,' he believed.<sup>74</sup> 'As man and woman by their varied gifts and faculties supplement each other, so should town and country... Town and country *must be married*, and out of this joyous union will spring a new hope, a new life, a new civilization' (Howard's emphasis).<sup>75</sup>

His ideas were quickly absorbed in Christchurch, and by the beautifiers in particular. Tipples noted that Samuel Hurst Seager had conceived of his 1902 Clifton Hill development on Garden City lines and that he had been part of the same intellectual milieu in Britain from which the Garden City emerged.<sup>76</sup> However, public knowledge and interest in the idea dated back at least two years prior to this, when the *Press* reported the Garden City Association's progress at the beginning of 1900.

One of the newest associations in London appears under the name of "The Garden City Association". Its object is to induce manufacturers, and employers of labour on any large scale, to remove from cities, and set up their works in country districts now nearly deserted – thus revivifying the sparsely populated agricultural areas and lessening the "drift towards towns." Mr Frederic Harrison's lecture in Toynbee Hall on "Ideal London" began the movement. Mr Ebenezer Howard's really remarkable book, "To-morrow; Peaceful Path to Real Reform," carried the idea into detail with such success that the Association now formed resolves to work exactly on the lines which he suggests...

A plan for "Garden City" is, in fact, already drawn, and we hear that "idealists are enchanted by the bright vista of boulevards, gardens, model buildings, chaste architecture, and other pleasing characteristics," while the social reformer hails the scheme as a possible relief from the growing and terrible evils produced by overcrowding.

... Probably the weak spot in the business is pointed out in the grim remark by an employer of labour, "after all manufacture will only leave crowded towns to suit either their convenience or their finances, and not at the bidding of an association." It should be remembered, however, that within the last few years, at no man's bidding, many large commercial firms have individually transferred their workshops from town to country, and, in provisions for their employees, have anticipated, in all but extent, almost all the delights projected by the imaginary Garden City.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (London, Faber and Faber, 1945 ed.), p.48

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p.48

<sup>76</sup> Tipples, 'Christchurch – The First Garden City?', p.33

<sup>77</sup> 'Relieving London', *The Press*, 27 January 1900

The development of Garden City thinking in Britain was an example of the periphery affecting the metropolis. Here was a scheme with the potential to reinvent London itself by adopting the colonial model: essentially, it involved the colonisation of the British countryside. By learning from the experience of the more recent, more systematic colonies – Howard was a fan of Edward Gibbon Wakefield<sup>78</sup> – British workers might also have land on which to produce food, and their well-spaced homes would ameliorate the effects of overcrowding and pollution of the major conurbations. The efforts of Christchurch's horticultural establishment to improve workers' neighbourhoods with beautiful home gardens therefore not only fitted the Garden City Association's aims, but indeed gave the Horticultural Society and now the Beautifying Association a certain edge even over London.

Among those who had been concerned with the overcrowding of British cities, Sir John Gorst stands out, and this explains his 1906 proclamation in Christchurch. Gorst's involvement with New Zealand dated back to the 1860s as the Government representative in the Waikato, introducing a form of local government there. The Native Minister wrote in 1863 that Gorst had given up certain luxuries to 'live in the bush... for the sake of laying the foundations, with a few poor Native boys, of a school that should replace the indolence and dirt of a pa, by the industry, discipline, and comfort of a civilized home'.<sup>79</sup> The improvement of peoples was a life-long occupation. In 1891 to 1894, he was part of a royal commission on labour and was subsequently involved in an inquiry into the poor-law schools of London.<sup>80</sup> Gorst's ideas were not unknown in Christchurch; his concern with 'the physical degeneracy amongst British school children resulting from wrong-feeding' had been reported on in the *Press* in 1904.<sup>81</sup> In 1906 he wrote *The Children of the Nation* which, with a focus on children's health, 'indirectly foreshadowed the principles of Truby King'.<sup>82</sup> Such developments in thinking were part of an international movement affecting particularly Britain, Germany, America and Australia.<sup>83</sup> Howard's book quoted Gorst twice from an 1891 *Daily Chronicle* report deploring the migration of people into towns, which he perceived as a great modern evil. Howard argued that the construction of his Garden City 'magnet', 'could it be effected,

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<sup>78</sup> '...my scheme is a combination of three distinct projects which have, I think, never been united before. These are: (1) The proposals for an organized migratory movement of population of Edward Gibbon Wakefield and of Professor Alfred Marshall; (2) the system of land tenure first proposed by Thos. Spence and afterwards (though with an important modification) by Herbert Spencer; and (3) the model city of James Silk Buckingham.' Howard, p.119

<sup>79</sup> F. D. Bell, quoted by Keith Sinclair in his introduction to John Gorst, *The Maori King* (London, 1959 ed.), p.xiv

<sup>80</sup> W. Feuchtwanger, 'Gorst, Sir John Eldon', in H. Matthew and B. Harrison (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: From the Earliest Times to the Year 2000*, Vol.22 (Oxford, 2004), p.1018

<sup>81</sup> 'Jam and Pickles', *The Press*, 5 March 1904

<sup>82</sup> K. Arvidson, 'Editor's Introduction', in John Gorst, *The Maori King* (Auckland, 2001 ed.), p.ix

<sup>83</sup> Graeme Davison, 'The City-Bred Child and Urban Reform in Melbourne 1900-1940', in Peter Williams (ed.), *Social Process and the City* (Sydney, 1983), p.144

followed, as it would be, by the construction of many more, would certainly afford a solution to the burning question set before us by Sir John Gorst...'<sup>84</sup> Gorst, in turn, wrote in *Children of the Nation*:

The Garden City at Letchworth, in Hertfordshire, holds out advantages to both employers and employed... Every cottage will have a garden or an allotment within easy reach... The streets of the town will be broad avenues planted with trees, letting light and air into the heart of the city, and there will be parks, playgrounds, and open spaces, so as to make the place beautiful as well as healthy. In this city the worker will have a healthy home, and his wife and children will live in conditions nearly approaching those of country life.<sup>85</sup>

At Bourneville, a garden suburb established on the same lines, '[e]very house has its garden, by no means restricted to the growth of saleable produce. There are luxuriant flowers in front of each dwelling, as well as useful fruits and vegetables behind...'<sup>86</sup> Gorst's Christchurch endorsement of Ebenezer Howard's idea was thus a form of self-referencing; Christchurch, thought Gorst, proved his point.

Tipples also neglected to mention the presence at the International Exhibition of the Garden City Association itself. Its display was situated alongside exhibits which seemed to highlight the social degradation and economic difficulties experienced in Britain: pauperism, strikes, fluctuations in prices of food consumed by London's working classes, and the geographic distribution by class of London's population from the 'vicious, semi-criminal' through to the upper middle class.<sup>87</sup> Another display, on English sweated industries, contained a large number of items 'gathered for the purpose of showing the miserably paid condition of thousands upon thousands of workers in Great Britain.' The goods represented 'almost inconceivably low payment for hard, unremitting toil; and the hygienic dangers were only too apparent when one reflected on the awful conditions of dirt, disease, and misery generally which exist in the homes of the British workers in which these trades are carried on'.<sup>88</sup> By contrast, the Garden City Association's display described its aims 'to promote the relief of overcrowded areas, and to secure a wider distribution of population over the land'. Its garden cities were 'designed to secure healthful and adequate housing, in which the inhabitants shall become in a collective capacity the owners of the sites' while the Association encouraged 'the removal of manufactures from congested centres to the country, and [sought to improve] the

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<sup>84</sup> Howard, pp.42-43, 49

<sup>85</sup> John Gorst, *The Children of the Nation* (London, 1907, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), pp.274-275

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p.276

<sup>87</sup> James Cowan, *Record of the New Zealand International Exhibition of Arts and Industries* (Wellington, 1910), p.232

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p.151

conditions of existing towns.’<sup>89</sup> The display included books such as Howard’s, and views of experimental townships such as Port Sunlight. A block plan of the First Garden City, Letchworth, was also included. The Garden City concept was considered a radical departure from existing British conditions.

The colony was the model for this transformation. Walter Cook, in his chapter on the Exhibition’s gardens, which he believed reflected something of British heritage since the Neolithic period, as well as New Zealand’s progress, mentioned James Cowan’s focus on the gardens in his *Official Record*.<sup>90</sup> However, Cook failed to emphasise that in this showpiece Christchurch was not merely following the great tradition established with Paxton of Chatsworth’s Crystal Palace in 1851, but was showing the world how it was exemplifying modern town-planning possibilities, *in opposition* to the great metropolis of London. In the centre was the Exhibition itself, a celebration of imperial greatness. The building ‘rose like a palace of white and gold above the oak trees, and flower-gardens, and fresh emerald lawns... through weeping-willow arches and past tall sentry-rows of whispering poplars...’.<sup>91</sup> Similarly, the buildings of the city around this Building rose

... through the soft green groves and the rose-gardens; here and there a glimpse of the winding Avon, with its one or two little islands, brimming with beautiful shrubs and flowers, dividing its course; the suburbs that shaded off into pretty English-like country lanes and rich green fields, dotted with homesteads half-buried in their orchards and sheltering plantations... Room to see and breathe; a fresh health-bringing joy-inspiring summer air... a very Eden of shade and flowers.<sup>92</sup>

Alongside the Exhibition grounds, on Park Terrace, were pretty houses and ‘twining rose gardens’, on the other more ‘swaying willows’. There were ‘lengths of green turf and brilliant flower plots’, as well as clumps of New Zealand flax, cabbage trees, bamboos and arum lilies. All this along with ‘groves of fine English oaks and elms, planes, chestnut, and sycamore’.<sup>93</sup> The effect was, in William Robinson style, ‘a pleasant little woodland setting’, offset by brightly dressed groups of ‘femininity’. The flowerbeds were especially outstanding, viewed best, according to Cowan, not from amongst them, but from above, in the Exhibition tower.

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid., pp.232-233

<sup>90</sup> Walter Cook, ‘Gardens at the Exhibition: Garnishing for a Harvest Festival’, in John Mansfield Thomson (ed.), *Farewell Colonialism: The New Zealand International Exhibition, Christchurch, 1906-07* (Palmerston North, 1998), p.55

<sup>91</sup> Cowan, p.16

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p.17

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p.72

The lawns were dotted with about forty flower-beds of various decorative shapes, containing geraniums of the prettiest varieties, pansies, asters, petunias, lobelias, white and yellow violas, marguerites, and heliotropes.<sup>94</sup>

Along the front of the building was another flowerbed of geraniums, dahlias, bulbs and conifers. Other beds in the lawn gardens were made of yellow calceolarias, violas, pansies, phlox, ivy-geraniums and crimson nasturtiums. Cowan stated that about 100,000 plants had been used in these displays, impressing even 'some of the best-known Australian horticulturists'.<sup>95</sup> Again, the one-upmanship with Australia is evident.

During the Exhibition season, the Canterbury United Horticultural Society held four major flower shows. *The Star* garden columnist had advised gardeners about these shows as early as July 1906, so that they should lose no time 'in making preparations if they wish to win prizes'.<sup>96</sup> Cowan reported that the shows were supposedly 'the most beautiful and comprehensive yet organized in New Zealand'.<sup>97</sup> The dahlia show alone required 1,000 feet of tables, and an additional 700 feet of floor space, with 265 entries. New Zealand native plants also featured.<sup>98</sup> Thus, displays of garden productions created an overwhelming effect at the Exhibition on the inside as well as on the outside. For Cowan, 'Christchurch is a city of flowers';<sup>99</sup> this was unquestionably how the beautifiers wanted Christchurch to be received and understood. Here is a direct parallel between the drawing of Christchurch as a Utopian Garden City, and the earlier hype of 'Marvellous Melbourne' which 'like any authentic myth, interpreted the past, illuminated the present and offered a clue to the future'.<sup>100</sup> That Victoria was reinvented in 1907 as 'the Garden State' suggests that a study of linkages between Christchurch and Melbourne may prove particularly fruitful.

### Home Garden Competitions

The Garden City, as presented to Christchurch in 1906, proved to be a great enabling myth for the beautifiers. Indeed, an ailing Sir John Hall was wheeled out as honorary Mayor for the duration of the Exhibition, and would have been proud to see his city showcased in this way. The Canterbury Horticultural Society and the Christchurch Beautifying Association restarted home garden competitions in 1898,<sup>101</sup> followed by what appears to have been a Canterbury

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p.73

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p.73

<sup>96</sup> 'Work for the Week', *The Star*, 14 July 1906

<sup>97</sup> Cowan, p.383

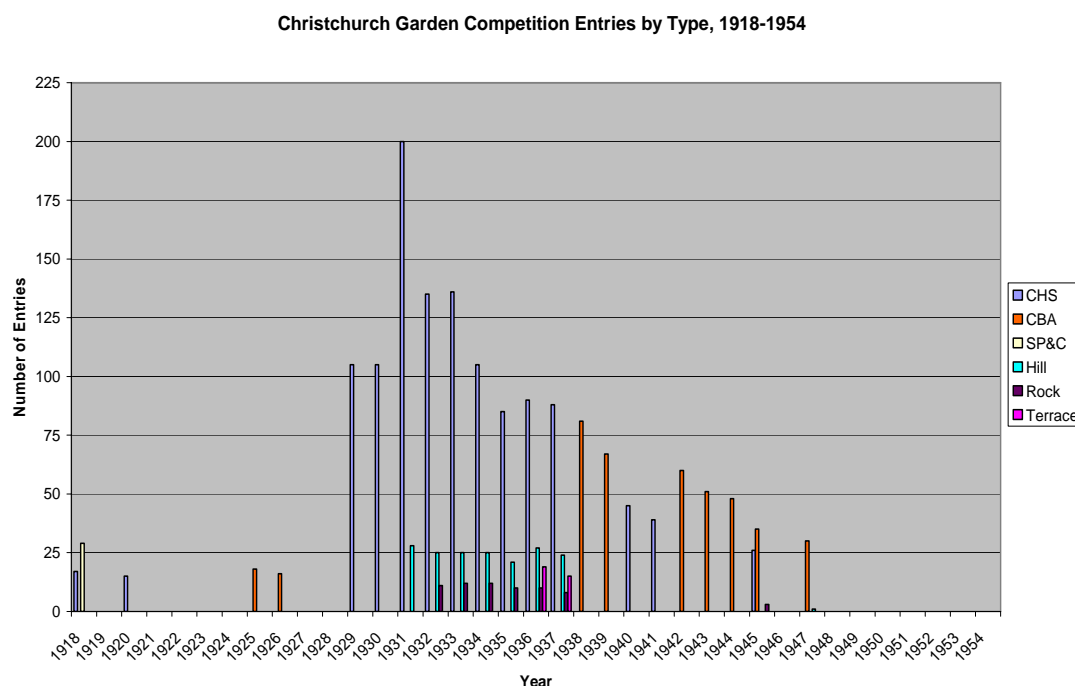
<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p.384

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p.384

<sup>100</sup> See Graeme Davison, *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne* (Melbourne, 1978), p.15

<sup>101</sup> Amodeo, *Wilderness*, p.154

Horticultural Society competition in 1899.<sup>102</sup> This was the last such competition until that run by the Sweet Pea and Carnation Society in 1917.<sup>103</sup> The Beautifying Association considered reintroducing a home garden competition in 1909, but Harry Ell, who was to look into the matter, appears not to have done anything about it.<sup>104</sup> Instead, the emphasis was on school and railway station gardens.<sup>105</sup> Most of its efforts reflected an interest in beautifying public space.



**Table 2: Christchurch Garden Competition Entries by Type, 1918-1954**

From 1917, regular home garden competitions took place in Christchurch, apart from a hiatus 1922-1924.<sup>106</sup> At least three different organisations held citywide contests, the Sweet Pea and Carnation Society, the Canterbury Horticultural Society and the Christchurch Beautifying Association. Local competitions were also held. The focus of these was still fixed on ‘cottagers’; the 1918 Canterbury Horticultural Society competition was called a ‘Cottage

<sup>102</sup> *The Press*, 10 March 1899. This competition was not mentioned by Amodeo.

<sup>103</sup> As Amodeo has noted, the Canterbury Horticultural Society held its first home garden competition of the twentieth century in 1918. However, in the same year a larger home garden competition was organised by the Sweet Pea and Carnation Society, and the judges commented ‘that the gardens showed a great improvement on those entered last year, and this was taken as evidence that the competition was encouraging amateur effort.’ ‘Cottage Garden Competition: Judging Day’, *The Press*, 7 January 1918. See also Thelma Strongman, *City Beautiful: The First 100 Years of the Christchurch Beautifying Association* (Christchurch, 1999), p.88. There is, however, no record in *The Press* for 1917 of this competition.

<sup>104</sup> 14 September 1909, Christchurch Beautifying Association Minute Books, Vol. 1, 1906-1928, p.116, *CM*

<sup>105</sup> 11 April 1910, Christchurch Beautifying Association Minute Books, Vol. 1, 1906-1928, p.130, *CM*

<sup>106</sup> Amodeo, *Wilderness*, p.48

Garden' competition<sup>107</sup> even though the prize schedule shows that the anticipated layouts of these gardens were not the mixtures of vegetables, herbs and flowers Christine Dann spoke about in her book on cottage gardening,<sup>108</sup> but rather of typical workers' gardens.<sup>109</sup> It is not clear how many people entered these contests, as minutes and press reports did not always mention precise numbers. Table 2 above shows the numbers that were reported by the different organisations. It must be assumed from this that public interest in participation was initially minimal, and grew suddenly from the late 1920s. One reason for this is that the basis for the competitions changed so that the various Burgesses Associations ran individual competitions with the aid of the Horticultural Society, from which overall winners were selected.<sup>110</sup>

Membership numbers for the Canterbury Horticultural Society climbed steeply in the same period. By 1927 membership had reached 537, climbed suddenly to 773 the following year and gained its thousandth member in 1929.<sup>111</sup> Thereafter, numbers remained at over one thousand throughout the period under review, except during the war years of 1940 to 1944. Despite the war, however, numbers never fell below 970. In 1953 the membership reached 2000 (Table 3). It is striking that the first spike in membership occurred during the Depression, as did the first spike in garden competition entrants. For both, World War Two represented a dip, despite the fact that soldiers on service retained honorary memberships.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> 12 October 1917, CHS Minute Books, unnumbered volume (1912-1934), *CHS*

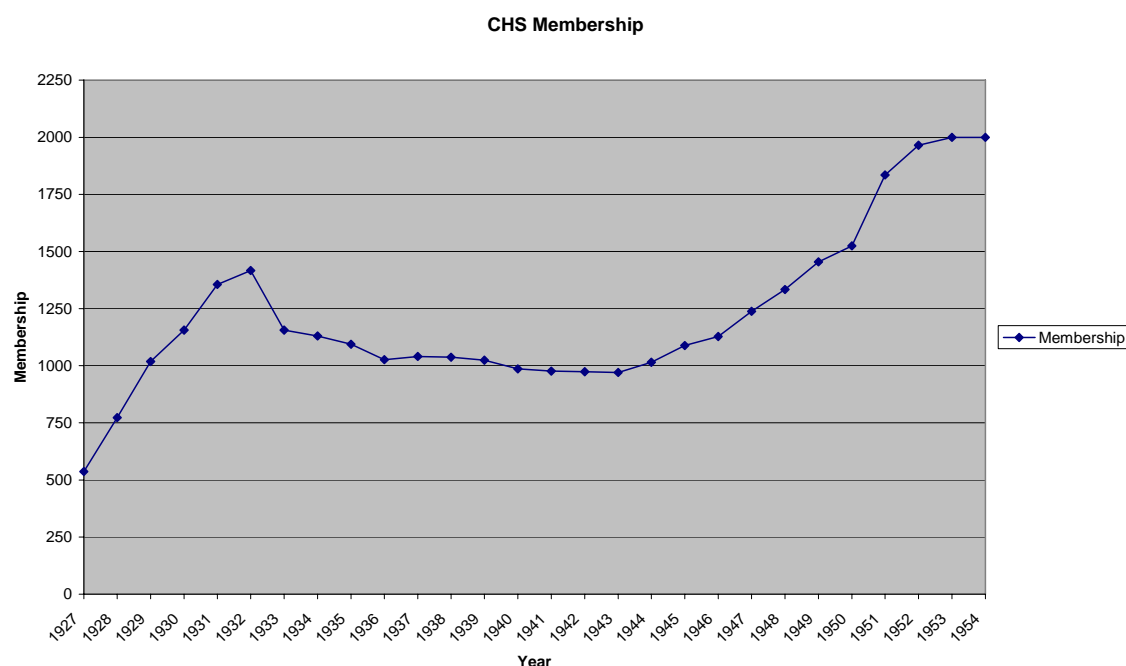
<sup>108</sup> Christine Dann, *Cottage Gardening in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1990), pp.1-5

<sup>109</sup> 23 January 1919, CHS Minute Books, unnumbered volume (1912-1934), *CHS*

<sup>110</sup> 30 August 1928, CHS Minute Books, unnumbered volume (1912-1934), *CHS*

<sup>111</sup> *CB* July 1928, p.3; 'Annual Report', 31 May 1930, CHS Minute Books, unnumbered volume (1912-1934), *CHS*

<sup>112</sup> 24 June 1942, CHS Minutes, CHS Minute Books (1944-1946), *CHS*



**Table 3: Canterbury Horticultural Society Membership Numbers, 1927 to 1954**

Although membership peaked in 1953, interest in the garden competitions had already waned. For these, greatest interest coincided with the worst years of the Depression. This was the same for the horticultural shows. The entries in the Canterbury Horticultural Society's gladiolus and dahlia show of 1934, for example, numbered 830, compared with 595 the previous year.<sup>113</sup> The Canterbury Commercial Travellers and Warehousemen's Association also held home garden competitions at this time, and in 1934 remarked that entries had been the highest since their competition began in 1930. The prize list included awards not only for flowers, but also vegetable garden, fernery and lawn.<sup>114</sup> Ursula Bethell mentioned in a letter to her publisher of 1932 that

Many confess that they are surprised to find themselves happier since the Slump... A rose-nurseryman whom I visited the other day... said he hadn't done at all so badly this year. People stopping at home more, & working in their gardens...<sup>115</sup>

Beautiful gardens began to be seen as a source of respite. In February 1934, the Rev. J. T. Holman, visiting Christchurch, gave a sermon in which he said gardens were a source of spiritual uplift. He warned, however, that the Devil also dwelt in them.<sup>116</sup>

<sup>113</sup> 'Gladiolus and Dahlia: Horticultural Society's Show', *The Press*, 2 February 1934

<sup>114</sup> 'Horticulture: Commercial Travellers' Competition', *The Press*, 10 February 1934

<sup>115</sup> Ursula Bethell to Frank Sidgwick, 23 July 1932, MB microfilm 96/1, *MB*

<sup>116</sup> 'Gardens of the Bible', *The Press*, 5 February 1934



From 1935, interest in the garden competitions dropped back to less than one hundred entries, and from 1944, the largest competition had less than fifty entries. With such a brief burst of popularity, therefore, it might appear that the garden competitions had a limited impact in the city. This is not the case. Like garden produce exhibitions, home garden competitions publicly modelled a certain kind of righteousness. The competitions established the criteria for what was considered 'good' and publicly rewarded those that followed the prescription. They also put pressure on others to follow suit. The *Lyttelton Times* outlined the effect of the competitions in 1925:

The competitions instituted by the Canterbury Horticultural Society some years ago, and conducted annually since, have been instrumental, if not in increasing the devotion of suburbanites to the lawn mower and the edging shears, in bringing forward for appraisal some extremely striking examples of the art with which a small garden may be designed, and the skill with which the design may be executed. The prize-winning gardens are invariably of a sort that the average amateur knows he or she has no earthly chance of emulating - little paradises into which, apparently, dandelion and twitch have never been known to enter, within whose borders the earwig and the woolly aphis feel like fish out of water, and into whose apples the codlin moth would never dare to steal. They are plots where the asters grow larger, the chrysanthemums straighter, and the lobelias more regularly than the average mortal can coax Nature to produce them, but their existence, and the advertisement given to their existence by competitive success raises the morale, so to speak, of a whole suburb. While the average amateur gardener is convinced he can never do as well, he is generally impelled to do a little better than he has been doing. Even to read about those paragon plots is enough to impress the generality of mortals with a sense of guilt or shortcoming, as though perfection in domestic horticulture were one of the essential virtues. Whether it be a virtue or not, it is closely allied with virtue, for it implies the love of home and a strong sense of the beautiful, sentiments that lie at the root of real civic greatness. From this point of view the Horticultural Society is a valuable asset to the city, and it is to be hoped it will long continue its endeavours to maintain a high standard of amateur gardening.<sup>117</sup>

The Canterbury Horticultural Society proudly reprinted the article in its journal *The City Beautiful* in 1928.<sup>118</sup> It may have been a tongue-in-cheek analysis, but that these 'paragon plots' exemplified traits associated with civic virtue was indeed a truism. Jack Humm echoed the sentiments in 1930 in his report on Sumner and Redcliffs gardens. 'These prize gardens' he said, 'set a standard in horticulture, and show what can be accomplished in garden making. Competition also urges those interested to greater effort, and encourages the residents to take greater pride in their home grounds.'<sup>119</sup>

Home garden competitions were not a compulsory act, of course, and gardeners invited judgment. In their participation their good works received public acknowledgment and *mana*

<sup>117</sup> 'Editorial', *LT*, 24 February 1925; see also Amodeo, *Wilderness*, pp.154-155

<sup>118</sup> 'The Amateur Garden', *CB*, April 1928

<sup>119</sup> Jack Humm, 'Delightful Gardens at Sumner and Redcliffs', *CB*, August 1930, p.9

was conferred by men in positions of social power: the Mayor for example. Punishment was not meted out to those who failed to beautify their gardens, but pressure was exerted on them to do so nevertheless. They could expect to be impressed ‘with a sense of guilt or shortcoming’; a degree of disciplining is therefore observable. As Foucault appreciated, the ‘success of disciplinary power derives no doubt from the use of simple instruments; hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement and their combination in a procedure that is specific to it, the examination.’ To discipline, Foucault believed, requires the ability to observe: ‘an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power, and in which, conversely, the means of coercion make those on whom they are applied clearly visible.’<sup>120</sup> Christine Dann has argued that the home garden competitions constituted just such an exercise of power.<sup>121</sup> In the present reading, these competitions were an extension of the produce exhibitions, a perfected form of observation, a means, at the very least, of establishing a gaze and creating a system of judgment identifying the good and the rest. By the end of the period discussed in this thesis – from 1950 – whole street competitions had been instituted, extending this process even further.

It should also be noted that just as workers’ gardens were particularly scrutinised, so to were their places of work. In 1918 members of the Canterbury Sweet Pea and Carnation Society, and the Christchurch Beautifying Association visited the Woolston Tanneries ‘to inspect the gardens laid out on part of the factory site.’ They remarked that they had ‘no idea, no conception, that the somewhat despised borough of Woolston – despised as regards beautification – possessed in its centre such a beautiful spot.’<sup>122</sup> Railway gardens were examined from 1928;<sup>123</sup> factories from 1930.<sup>124</sup> In February 1950, T. D. Lennie, garden columnist for the *Press* noted:

One has only to travel round the outskirts and suburbs of the city to realise how wonderfully well residents uphold the reputation of the “garden city”, for it is most unusual to find a household with an unkempt garden. The winners of garden display competitions do not earn their honours easily. They are mostly got by careful planning and attention to detail with good maintenance.<sup>125</sup>

Morality was at stake here as much as horticulture.

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<sup>120</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York, 1995 ed.), p.170

<sup>121</sup> Dann argues that the competitions constituted a male exercise of power over women. Christine Dann, ‘Sweet William and Sticky Nellie: Sex Differences in New Zealand Gardening and Garden Writing’, *Women’s Studies International Forum*, Vol.15, No.2, 1992, p.246

<sup>122</sup> ‘Works and Gardens: Beautifying the Workers’ Surroundings’, *The Press*, 11 February 1918

<sup>123</sup> 26 July 1928, CHS Minute Books, unnumbered volume (1912-1934), *CHS*

<sup>124</sup> Minutes of Annual General Meeting, 31 May 1930, CHS Minute Books, unnumbered volume (1912-1934), *CHS*

<sup>125</sup> *The Press*, 10 February 1950

Articles on this favourite subject published in *The City Beautiful* emphasise the importance of judgment day. These varied very little to the 1950s. The competitors ‘had the satisfaction of knowing that every blade of grass, every flower, every border was as near perfection as they could make it’, while the judges, ‘fourteen of them in all, had a day of almost unalloyed pleasure, inspecting, criticising, appraising, comparing, admiring.’<sup>126</sup> In 1954 it was described thus: the gardens were ‘judged from the back fence to the front...’

Everything counts. And after all the points have been allotted for all the things that make up a garden, and all the things the devoted owner has set out to show, there’s a big allocation for “design, harmony, and arrangement”... [T]he judges have considered the trees and shrubs, their prevalence, their health, and their suitability. Perhaps some of them have outgrown their situations, or have lost their shapeliness... Hedges, if any – are they neatly clipped? Is the garden bright with well-grown flowers? Is there a sufficient planting of perennials, so that there will be gay beds and borders when summer’s past?... The judges stop to examine interesting features as they pass, and all the time they keep an eye on the lawns, judging them for freedom from weeds, neat cutting, trimmed edges...

The eagle eye of the experienced judge instantly detects signs of a last-minute clean-up, as contrasted with a garden which gives every indication of being practically up to show standard every day of the year.<sup>127</sup>

The level of scrutiny was part of a performance, a ritual, in which the winning garden was undoubtedly confirmed as an important site exemplifying the virtues of citizenship already discussed.

Competition organisers expected that members of the public would visit the winning gardens to learn about how to improve their own. The *Press* and *The City Beautiful* printed photographs to give an idea of what was expected. Far from being uniform in design, the different gardens displayed different plant materials and differing planting designs (Figures 10 to 15). Model gardens came in various shapes and sizes, and varied across time. June Stewart remembered her parents’ prize-winning Papanui garden of the 1920s, which she recalled ‘making history’ by appearing in the newspaper. ‘[M]ostly it was large areas of lawn and there was a big orchard down the back that was covered in daffodils in the spring.’<sup>128</sup> It was ‘a sort of wild garden’, with bamboos, large trees and shrubs. June’s parents are credited with bringing back from England the first ‘of the good hyacinths’, in 1927 or 1928. It also had ‘an enormous vegetable garden out the back’ and large asparagus beds. The large orchard contained Gravensteins, a Black Prince apple ‘which had a... lovely dark, dark red skin, and a

<sup>126</sup> ‘Home Garden Competitions’, *CB*, April 1951, p.4

<sup>127</sup> ‘Judging in the C.H.S. Garden Competitions’, *CB*, March 1954, p.8

<sup>128</sup> June Stewart, interviewed 1 September 2005

glassy middle....',<sup>129</sup> Sturmers, pears (Winter Cole's and Winter Nellis), quinces and a row of peaches which ripened at different times. There were also raspberries, and red currants and white currants'. There was also a large, old walnut, and cherries in 'a big cherry house' which also accommodated the raspberries.<sup>130</sup> This massive garden, established in the 1920s, exemplifies the garden ideal, rarely achieved with such exactitude.

By the 1930s, native plants such as the cabbage tree and the tree fern were used as features, a period in which the Canterbury Horticultural Society offered a special category for 'native gardens' (see Chapter Four). Figure 10 shows the winner of Class A for 1930, and it is interesting to note that the winner was in Ruskin Street, Addington. The winner of the Class B category (Figure 11) for larger sections, was in Idris Road, Fendalton. Both gardens used natives, but in neither were they the only feature. The Addington garden also had a small rose bed by the front door, a line of what look like lobelias along a small, wire fence, and a cherry tree. Apart from the patchy strip of lawn beyond the fence, it was a very orderly garden.



**Figure 10: Canterbury Horticultural Society Winner, Class A, 1930. 66 Ruskin Street, Addington**  
 Source: *CB*, February 1930, p.25  
 (Reprinted courtesy of the Canterbury Horticultural Society)

<sup>129</sup> An obscure varietal also mentioned by Audrey Potter. See Chapter Seven, fn 34

<sup>130</sup> June Stewart, interviewed 1 September 2005

The same was true of the Fendalton garden. Although the ferns featured in the image, they would not alone have earned the prize. Mr Anderson, chair of the Canterbury Horticultural Society, made the following comment about this garden:

The champion garden, that of Mrs Adams, was excellent, and a distinctive feature of it was a very fine collection of ferns. The rhododendrons and azaleas also were very good, and the whole garden revealed a high standard of cultivation – almost perfect. In a bed of dahlias and one of gladioli there were many blooms that could have won prizes had they been exhibited at the shows.

He added that '[f]rom this point of view it is unfortunate that this garden is surrounded by a high fence.'<sup>131</sup> The concern about fences obstructing beauty was predominantly one held by the Beautifying Association, a desire they took to the City Council in 1946.<sup>132</sup> It was a very different attitude to those of the settlers, for whom fencing had been essential for cultivation. These Addington and Fendalton gardens demonstrate the point Helen Leach made that where native plants were used, they were generally fitted into a British design.



**Figure 11: Canterbury Horticultural Society Winner, Class B, 1930. Idris Road,**  
**Source: *CB*, February 1930, p.22**  
**(Reprinted courtesy of the Canterbury Horticultural Society)**

<sup>131</sup> O. W. B. Anderson, quoted in 'Christchurch Home Gardens Competition', *CB*, February 15, 1930, p.22

<sup>132</sup> 'Annual Report 1946-1947', Christchurch Beautifying Association Minute Books, Vol.2, p.314, *CM*

In the same competition, 'Greystones', also on Idris Road, won the New Zealand Institute of Architects prize for Taste and Design. This massive garden is discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight.

Native plants did not feature by the 1940s, but the idea of offsetting floral colour with foliage was retained. 'Greystones' was once again a winner, but the most important feature of this competition was the expansion of the competition to five categories, including one for state houses. These, it was noted, did particularly well in growing vegetables, something encouraged 'on account of the unsettled conditions prevailing during the war period'.<sup>133</sup> Good lawns and 'bright flowers' were other pleasing features of these gardens.<sup>134</sup> The winners of this category were in Spreydon and Riccarton. Despite such public comments, the judges noted in their report to the committee in 1941 that 'on the whole the gardens were a disappointment although in many cases the vegetables were very creditable.' They noted that 'apparently the householders lacked a knowledge of how to lay out their gardens, and the judges suggested that the Department might give some incentive, either financial or otherwise, to have proper advise [sic] given as to the best methods of laying out their properties.'<sup>135</sup> The 1942 report commented that '... the State House gardens showed very considerable improvement and the standard was now very high', and concluded that the 'winning gardens would not be disgraced in Class 4 of the Society's competitions.'<sup>136</sup> A crucial point to note with the judging of state housing gardens is that there were no 'contestants' in the ordinary sense: *all* state house gardens were judged by the Society, whether tenants liked it or not. By 1946, with the growth of state housing under the first Labour government, this posed organisational problems: '... with the State House Areas considerable difficulty was being experienced, and if all the blocks were to be visited it would take three days.' The solution, Mr Shanks suggested to the Society, was that 'State Housing Competitions should be brought into line with the Home Gardens Competitions and that entries be called for, further that State House judging be carried out on the same day if practicable.'<sup>137</sup> State house tenants, the Society believed, needed to conform to certain standards that they were responsible for maintaining. Vegetable production, particularly during the unusual conditions of wartime, was acceptable, but garden layout was more important. These competitions discouraged disgraceful gardens. For state house tenants, the garden judging system was a disciplining system.

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<sup>133</sup> 'State House Scheme: Garden Competition', *CB*, February 1940, p.14

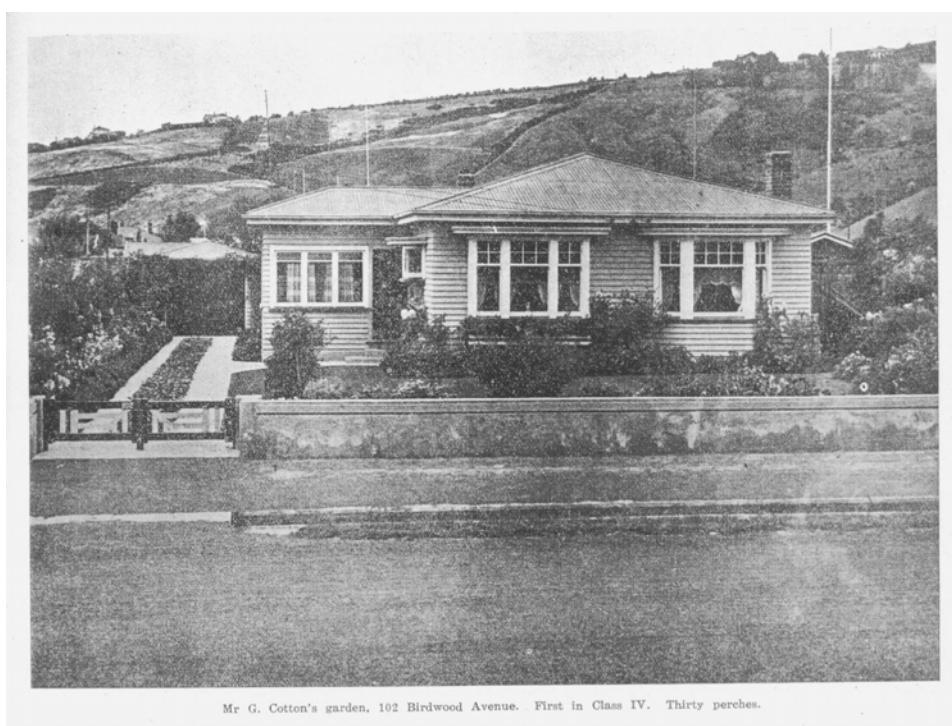
<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p.14

<sup>135</sup> 11 March 1941, CHS Minute Books (1940-1946), *CHS*

<sup>136</sup> 10 March 1942, CHS Minute Books (1940-1946), *CHS*

<sup>137</sup> 5 March 1946, CHS Minute Books (1940-1946), *CHS*

The Society also offered a thirty perch section category. The winner of this, in Somerfield, is pictured in Figure 12. In this winning Somerfield garden the lawn was a major feature – unlike the images from 1930 – fringed with flowering shrub borders. Again, a low front fence was important, allowing a view from the street and as a concrete fence it fitted with the Beautifying Association's comments of the same year. As a result of the 'Open Garden Competition', it claimed, 'practically all of the recently built houses in the City... have adopted low brick, stone or concrete front fences, in some cases the whole street is now completed in this way and the idea is very effective in beautifying the district.'<sup>138</sup> The competitions were meant to effect change.



**Figure 12: Canterbury Horticultural Society Winner, 102 Birdwood Avenue, Somerfield, 1940**  
**Source: CB, February 1940, p.17**  
 (Reprinted courtesy of the Canterbury Horticultural Society)

By the late 1940s, the high colour component had overtaken other design considerations completely. Figures 13 and 14 depict the garden at 36 Heaton Street, a winner of the Christchurch Beautifying Association's garden competition c1949. The colour images show an immaculate lawn, perfect for practising golf shots, surrounded by a blaze of colour. The lawn was divided from the border with precisely placed bricks. From the street were seen topiaried conifers of different kinds amidst the dahlias and marigolds. The colourful annual bedding plants along the front formed a dividing strip with the footpath, further emphasised by carefully placed rocks. Although not from a public record, these photographs show in

<sup>138</sup> Christchurch Beautifying Association Minute Books, Vol. 2, p.242, CM



excellent detail the attributes of gardens meant for public display and instruction. Again, the differences with winners of the Horticultural Society competitions were minor. Figure 15 shows the winning garden at 10 St James Avenue taken by the Society in 1953. Exactly the same kind of design was in evidence, although the colours were somewhat more muted.



**Figure 13: Lyall Sallow and Gillian Jones playing golf, 36 Heaton Street, Fendalton, c1949**  
**Source: Gillian Fox Private Collection**

Despite the obvious differences, there are certain important similarities that made these gardens prizewinners. They all contained clearly delineated shrubbery and flower borders, with a mixture of annuals and perennials to ensure attractiveness throughout the year and not just at judging season; paths were clearly set apart; and plant height was in proportion to house size. That is to say, a concern with visibility, tidiness, shapeliness and cleanliness of line was constant across the whole period, while interest in colour and species was variable. Another important feature is that the emphasis was on the view from the street. The Horticultural Society always remarked on the whole of the garden, but its photographic representations of them usually were of a view of the front. Utility was not as important as beauty.



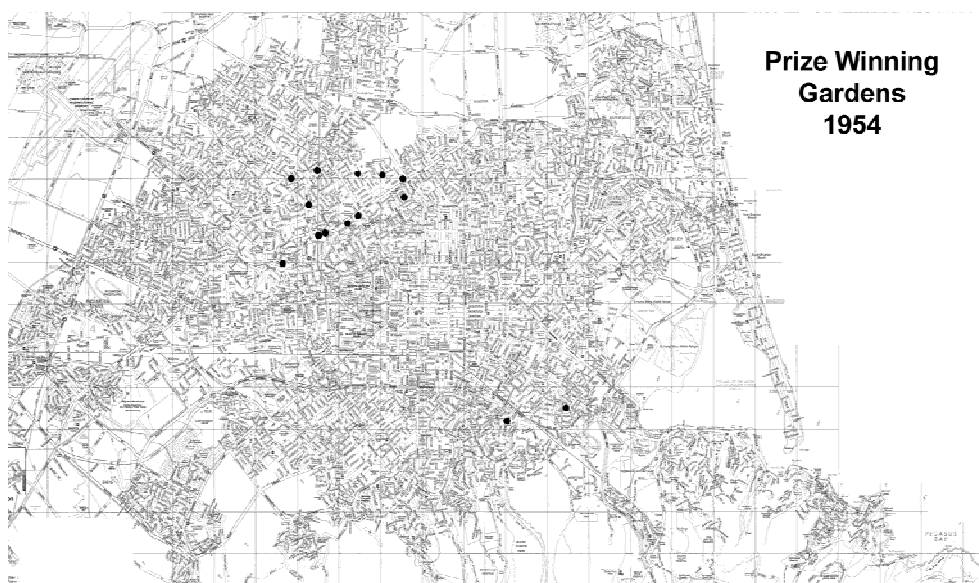


**Figure 14: 36 Heaton Street with Kay Swallow, formerly Jones, c1949**  
Source: Gillian Fox Private Collection



**Figure 15: 10 St James Avenue, 1953**  
Source: Canterbury Horticultural Society Photographic Archive  
(Reprinted courtesy of the Canterbury Horticultural Society)

In nine sample years during the period 1918 to 1954 (1918, 1920, 1925, 1930, 1935, 1940, 1945, 1950, 1954),<sup>139</sup> winning gardens were found in clusters, but the areas shifted from the north (St Albans) and south (Addington and Beckenham) towards the north west (Merivale and Fendalton) from 1930. By 1940, while Merivale and Fendalton retained a strong showing, suburbs to the south again received recognition. However, in the year of the Queen's visit to Christchurch, 1954, a very dense clustering of winners occurred in Merivale and Fendalton, almost to the complete exclusion of any other area (Figure 16).<sup>140</sup> While one might have expected the whole of Christchurch to put equal effort into their gardens this year, the disproportionate number of winners in Merivale and Fendalton demonstrates how strongly felt the nexus of civic fidelity and environment was in those suburbs at that time.



**Figure 16: Canterbury Horticultural Society Prize Winning Gardens, 1954**  
 Data compiled from *CB*, March 1954, p.9  
 (Map of Christchurch reprinted courtesy of Kiwimaps)

For the nine sample years selected, seventy-six different addresses appeared, not including district winners and separate competitions targeting only specific suburbs. Of the seventy-six addresses, four proved impossible to verify (one in 1930 and three in 1935), although the areas were Barrington St (Addington/ Spreydon), St Albans, Shirley and Papanui Rd

<sup>139</sup> For the 1918 awards given by the Sweet Pea and Carnation Society see 'Cottage Garden Competition: Judging Day', *The Press*, 7 January 1918. Compare these with the first Canterbury Horticultural Society awards where many of the winners were the same, as were the judges: 'Cottage Garden Competition: Awards by Horticultural Society', *The Press*, 26 February 1918; 'Horticulture Gardens Competition', *The Press*, 9 February 1920. Results for the 1925 Canterbury Horticultural Society competition have not been located; in lieu of these the winners for the Christchurch Beautifying Association's Competition', *The Press*, 23 February 1925. 'Christchurch Home Gardens Competition', *CB*, February 1930, pp.22-26; 'Canterbury Horticultural Society: Home Gardens Competitions, 1934-1935', *CB*, May 1935, pp.25-26; 'C.H.S. Home Gardens Competitions', *CB*, February 1940, pp.11-12; 'C.H.S. Home Gardens Competitions, 1945', *CB*, February 1945, pp.15-16; 'Home Garden Competition Results, 1950', *CB*, March 1950, p.4; 'Home and Factory Gardens', *CB*, March 1954, p.9

<sup>140</sup> 'Home and Factory Gardens', *CB*, March 1954, p.9

(Merivale). Overall, sixteen of the seventy-six addresses (21 per cent.) won more than once over the nine sample years, that is to say, at least twice in a period of at least ten years. Five (6.6 per cent.) won three times (371 River Road, 66 Ruskin Street, 142 Glandovey Road, 49 Idris Road and 108 Idris Road) and one, 49 Idris Road ('Greystones'), won on four occasions. This last, therefore, remained a winner for a period not less than twenty years. Three of the five gardens winning on three or four occasions were in Fendalton, although it should be noted, that from 1930, those gardens winning three or four times in the sampled years were all in Fendalton. Five of the sixteen gardens that won more than once in the nine sample years were in Fendalton, and two were in Merivale, a combined total of 43.75 per cent. Two were in neighbouring Riccarton, two in Richmond, while Woolston, St. Albans, Addington, Papanui and Opawa each had one garden that won more than once.

More to the point, around these long-term prizewinners, other prizewinners appeared. The most important site in the city in this regard was the intersection of Idris and Glandovey Roads; gardens continued to win within a radius of one block over the twenty-four years 1930-1954. The 'Greystones' estate (then 49 Idris Road and now 104 Glandovey Road) was at the centre of this activity. 142 Glandovey Road, which won on three occasions, was one block to the east; 108 Idris Road, which won the same number of times, was two blocks to the north. Two blocks to the east was 26 Heaton Street, which won on two occasions (1930 and 1940); 92 Heaton Street, also winning twice, was close by. Apart from the very long-term winners (winning two or more times in the sample years) winning addresses varied within the two suburbs somewhat. The different prizewinners were often located close to one another, within one or two blocks, which seems to denote a 'prize winning garden culture' in the area. This suggests that such gardens have, by their presence and their status, exerted a highly localised but very tangible pressure on the environment in their vicinity.

### **The Royal Visit, 1954**

The Garden City that had emerged in 1906 and had been cultivated from World War I with garden competitions climaxed in 1954 when Christchurch demonstrated its allegiance to the Crown in preparation for the visit of Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh. Belich noted that the Queen's 'reception was hugely enthusiastic'.<sup>141</sup> Easily the most important event in Christchurch's history to that time – 150,000 of a total population of just under 183,000 turned out to see the monarch – Christchurch had decided to 'Say it with Flowers'.<sup>142</sup> This

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<sup>141</sup> James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000* (Auckland, 2001), p.320

<sup>142</sup> CSS, 6 January 1954

was an opportunity to show Christchurch off as a fully-fledged Garden City. Christchurch was entirely transformed, if momentarily, by this experience and flowers showed this transformation most markedly.

The Queen's visit lasted for three full days, from the evening of 18 January to the morning of 22 January. The Christchurch newspapers announced that the Garden City had triumphed, and reproduced reports published in the London papers demonstrating that Christchurch's 'Englishness' was proven by its love of the monarchy:

"The 'Most English City' in New Zealand greets the Queen," and "A Town Just Like Home" are headlines over reports in English national newspapers from the correspondents reporting the Royal visit to Christchurch. ..

"The Times" states: "Without seeking to draw comparisons, it may be doubted whether the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh have found a warmer or more moving welcome than during these golden days at Christchurch, which, in its looks, retains so much of the spirit of the Canterbury Pilgrims, who came with a new conception of colonial development."

The "News Chronicle" states that Christchurch is "really a home from home."

"They say that Christchurch is the most English city outside of England, and after this first day of the Royal visit you can have no doubt about it..."<sup>143</sup>

Christchurch's Englishness and its gardening traditions were linked explicitly. At evensong, the Bishop of Christchurch used the occasion of the Civic Garden Party to retell the story that linked a sort of horticultural probity back to Kew Gardens – the heart of an Empire based on botanical manipulation.<sup>144</sup> Referring to Sir Joseph Banks, who had travelled with Captain Cook, the Bishop noted that Banks had been:

for 50 years director of the Royal Gardens at Kew. His name is commemorated on our peninsula but few realise that the site where the Royal garden party will be held derives much of its beauty from where so many of our horticulturalists have been trained.<sup>145</sup>

While the Garden Party provided an opportunity to link Christchurch back to the Royal Gardens at Kew, it was also viewed as the ultimate fruition of the Canterbury Pilgrims' efforts. 'Perhaps the blessing of the city fathers of an earlier day hovered lightly over the civic garden party yesterday, for it was held in the Botanic Gardens which their forethought and planning had devised, and in a setting surely as lovely as any to be found in the

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<sup>143</sup> CSS, 22 January 1954

<sup>144</sup> For a description of the way this idea has seeped into historiography, and how this conception has subsequently been unsettled, see Chapter One

<sup>145</sup> 'Garden Party Site,' *The Press*, 21 January 1954

Dominion...'.<sup>146</sup> Clearly, the most was made of these rhetorical opportunities for celebrating and weaving together Christchurch mythologies.

At the centre of the organisation for the visit, alongside the Town Clerk, was Morris Barnett, Director of Parks and Reserves (Figure 17). Barnett was one of those Kew-trained horticulturists the Bishop had spoken of, as was his foreman at the Botanic Gardens, John Taylor. 'Barnett pulled all the stops out to decorate the city, unbelievable amount of work he did,' Taylor remembered.<sup>147</sup> Barnett needed to, as Christchurch had to flower a month earlier than usual. A great deal of information about the public plantings and floral decorations is contained in newspaper reports, and the rigid timetable Barnett and his staff worked to can be seen in the memoranda he sent out.



**Figure 17: Morris Barnett, Director of Parks and Reserves, 1950. Detail from Photograph of Constitution Sub-Committee, New Zealand Parks Superintendents Association.**  
Source: John Taylor Private Collection

Barnett assured the *Christchurch Star-Sun* in early January that Christchurch would put on a strong show of flowers for the Queen, in her favourite colours of pink and light blue, as well as in red, white and blue.

Everything has come on well and all will be in readiness for the Queen and Duke. In the hundred or more garden plots about the city there have been special plantings. These are predominantly red, white, and blue, although in some instances pink tonings have been used.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>146</sup> 'Civic Garden Party Held in Sunshine with Ideal Setting', CSS, 21 January 1954

<sup>147</sup> John Taylor, interviewed 12 September 2003

<sup>148</sup> 'City Will Say it With Flowers to Queen and Duke', CSS, 6 January 1954



Mostly these plots were in geraniums and antirrhinums. A massive framework would meet the Royal couple at the railway station, with the words 'Welcome to Christchurch' spelt in gladioli. The banks of the Avon, which the Queen would look out on from the Clarendon Hotel, were 'planted out in ivy geraniums and the colours are the Queen's favourites – pink and light blue'. Victoria Square was planted with 'red, white, blue, and scarlet geraniums, as well as dark blue lobelia'. The Armagh and Montreal Street bridges were decorated with hydrangeas. The Rolleston Avenue plots were planted with geraniums, while standard fuchsias lined the museum walk.<sup>149</sup> The two tram shelters in Cathedral Square were decorated with foliage and golden marigolds,<sup>150</sup> and special window boxes at the Council Chambers and the Civic Theatre were installed and filled with floodlit foliage. Barnett was again in the newspaper just over a week later describing the floral arrangements for the investiture, 'one of the biggest jobs of the royal visit'. Roses and carnations were to be the main themes. 'In front of the stage will be gladioli, stocks and other cut flowers as well as pot plants.' Pastel shades, greens, soft pinks, and whites, would predominate. The work of doing this decorating was to fall to Mrs. O. M. Miller, 'a well-known member of several horticultural organisations who judges the decorative sections at many flower shows.'<sup>151</sup> Victoria Street Bridge had been decorated with about 50,000 blooms of everlasting daisies. On 18 January, the day the Queen arrived, the newspaper described the floral decorations in the Square as a 'Striking Tribute for Royal Visit'.<sup>152</sup> Barnett had his competition, too. Waimari County Council intended to farewell the Queen, with 'three big ropes of flowers and greenery supporting a crown... stretch[ing] across Riccarton Road just south of Hansons Lane... Blue cornflowers and yellow marigolds will be used exclusively for the ropes. The crown will be mostly of marigolds, with jewels picked out in carnations and different-coloured blooms.' It was to be '[o]ne of the most striking floral expressions of loyalty Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh will see during their city visit...'<sup>153</sup> Nevertheless, Barnett's heroic achievements were well recognised.

Logistically, Christchurch's floral expression of loyalty presented many difficulties. Barnett timed the work programme meticulously:

In connection with the preparation for the Royal Visit, each officer is to make himself thoroughly conversant with all arrangements made for the various decorations and functions... To prevent... confusion and to assist all officers to carry out the various

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> 'Carnations, Roses for Investiture', *CSS*, 15 January 1954

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> 'Floral Displays in Square Striking Tribute for Royal Visit', *CSS*, 18 January 1954

<sup>153</sup> 'Floral Motif to Farewell Queen', *CSS*, 14 January 1954

tasks allocated to them, it has been decided that all officers will meet at the Director's Office at 4.30p.m. on each day from the 12<sup>th</sup> January to the 19<sup>th</sup> January inclusive.<sup>154</sup>

Barnett had to work out who was going to do all the work, and from where the flowers were to come. Council staff were of course fully involved, but so was an army of volunteers provided by numerous garden clubs. 'Riccarron Garden Club will start panels of *Helichrysums* at 9a.m. at King Edward Barracks';<sup>155</sup> 'Stratford Garden Club will continue work on panels at King Edward Barracks';<sup>156</sup> 'Fendalton Garden Club, Wairarapa Garden Club and Shirley-St. Albans Garden Club to start fixing *Gladioli* to panels required for furnishing the Railway Station Site';<sup>157</sup> 'Townswomen's Guilds to start fixing *hydrangeas* to panels required for Montreal Street Bridge'<sup>158</sup>; 'Work to continue on the preparation of panels for the Railway Station and Montreal Street Bridge. Fendalton and Shirley-St Albans Garden Clubs. North Christchurch Garden Club and Townswomen's Guilds will continue with work'.<sup>159</sup> The Christchurch Rose Society and the Christchurch Carnation Society were responsible for decorating the Civic Theatre stage for the investiture.<sup>160</sup> There was a considerable public involvement.

There was also public involvement in the actual provision of plant materials. Most of the material came from Council parks and gardens, as specified in Barnett's memoranda.<sup>161</sup> However, public help was requested: 'if all our home gardens took the matter up as enthusiastically as for the Centennial, the flowers [for decorations] could be supplied economically, by voluntary effort.'<sup>162</sup> By August 1953, the Canterbury Horticultural Society said promises of flowers were 'raining in'. 'Her Majesty is a lover of flowers, so the decision to make this a real "Garden City" has much to commend it.' It was reckoned that the Society's members, 'representing probably 1500 gardens' could make a massive contribution.<sup>163</sup> The message was reiterated in September:

Her Majesty, like her gracious father before her, is a lover of flowers, so this City of Christchurch, which prides herself on being very English, has decided to "say it with flowers" in its scheme of decorations... "The Garden City" will live up to its name if everyone does his or her bit.<sup>164</sup>

<sup>154</sup> M. J. Barnett to all officers, Memorandum, 'Royal Visit Decorations', John Taylor Collection

<sup>155</sup> M. J. Barnett, 'Preparations for Royal Visit', John Taylor Collection, for 12 January 1954

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, for 13 January 1954

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, for 16 January 1954

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, for 16 January 1954

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, for 17 January 1954

<sup>160</sup> 'Carnations, Roses for Investiture', *CSS*, 15 January 1954

<sup>161</sup> M. J. Barnett, 'Hydrangeas'; 'Botanic Gardens'; 'Municipal Nursery', John Taylor Collection

<sup>162</sup> 'The Royal Visit', *CB*, July 1953, p.3

<sup>163</sup> 'Flowers for the Queen: Blooms Needed from Every Garden', *CB*, August 1953, p.3

<sup>164</sup> "Say it with Flowers", *CB*, September 1953, p.14

Gardeners were asked if they were ‘planning to help?’<sup>165</sup> and stocks of gladioli were reportedly sold out.<sup>166</sup> For Riccarton’s farewell floral display ‘people in the district have been growing flowers especially for it... [M]any residents have promised flowers from their own gardens when work on the floral ropes and crowns begins...’<sup>167</sup>

The result was an impressive display of loyalty in which the English Garden City myth was effectively reinscribed:

One of our major poets wrote, “Our England is a garden.” The masses and arrangements and banks of flowers which have greeted and delighted Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh throughout the Dominion must have convinced them that New Zealand, too, is a garden. Among the many desirable attributes that our forefathers brought from the Old Land was a love of flowers and gardening – an attribute that surely in the early days softened some of the hardships inseparable from pioneering a new country. It is interesting to recall in this connection that last year Christchurch observed the hundredth anniversary of its first horticultural Show, held just two years after the landing of the Canterbury Pilgrims. So well begun, this gardening as an expression of the people’s love of beauty has developed down the years, until our city has earned and still enjoys the description of “The Garden City,” notable alike for the number and excellence of private gardens and the world-renowned beauty of the Botanic Gardens, a priceless heritage. With such a background, and in the knowledge of the interest of the Royal Family in gardening, it was but natural that Christchurch should “say it with flowers” in preparing a welcome for our Queen.<sup>168</sup>

Barnett ‘thanked all those people who had grown flowers and helped in other ways’ with the investiture decorations.<sup>169</sup> He was thanked as well, receiving from the Royal Horticultural Society the prestigious diploma of the Associateship of Honour. Mabel Howard, M.P., Chair of the City Parks and Reserves Committee, sang his praises.<sup>170</sup>

Home gardeners also used their frontages to show their feelings. They had been asked by Barnett, via the Horticultural Society ‘to have Christchurch looking its best, and members could do much by brightening up their gardens and persuading others to do the same. Christchurch... was known as the Garden City; it certainly was a city of private gardens, and it was possible to make our streets and home surroundings so beautiful as to appeal to Her Majesty.’<sup>171</sup> T. D. Lennie, gardening columnist for the *Press*, noted that the ‘amount of

<sup>165</sup> ‘Flowers for the Royal Visit: Are You Planning to Help?’, *CB*, October 1953, p.5

<sup>166</sup> “‘Glads” for Royalty’, *CB*, November 1953, p.4

<sup>167</sup> ‘Floral Motif to Farewell Queen’, *CSS*, 14 January 1954

<sup>168</sup> ‘A Triumph of Flowers’, *CB*, February 1954, p.3

<sup>169</sup> ‘Carnations, Roses for Investiture’, *CSS*, 15 January 1954

<sup>170</sup> ‘Presentation of Distinguished Honours’, *CB*, June 1954, p.9

<sup>171</sup> ‘The Royal Visit’, *CB*, July 1953, p.3



flowers used in the city decorations must have been very large, but really made little impression on private gardens and those responsible should be well pleased with the success of their efforts.’<sup>172</sup> The only part of suburban Christchurch the Royal couple saw during their stay was in fact industrial Sydenham, on their way to and from the Lane, Walker & Rudkin factory. This was not necessarily what the people of Christchurch had wanted. ‘Loyal Subject’ wrote to the *Press* suggesting that, for the visit of the Queen and Duke to ‘the garden city of New Zealand’ they should ‘see the gardens and the houses of the people... Flowers and nice homes are refreshing after a long sea-voyage and official receptions.’<sup>173</sup> A correspondent signed as ‘South West’ said that some people ‘bewail the choice of a Sydenham factory for inspection by the Queen.’ Yet it was ‘too late for wailing; constructive ideas for beautifying the route would be more sensible.’ South West’s own idea was that ‘every adult should carry a spike of gladiolus to wave as the Queen goes by. This would distract Her Majesty’s attention from the dinginess of the area.’<sup>174</sup> In the event, there was no need for embarrassment. ‘Many of the houses did not have pretentious frontages but anything they lacked in appearance was more than made up by decorations and expressions of loyalty.’<sup>175</sup> Mrs Grieve’s house, 60 Montreal Street, had been decorated with ‘flax, pine branches, photographs, welcoming signs, and flowers’. Mr G. Brown’s house, at the corner of Elgin and Durham Streets, had also ‘boasted a brilliant welcoming display’, of fifty balloons and two floral displays, of the Crown, and “E.R.” Brown’s son had worked until one o’clock that morning finishing the flowers and told the paper, ‘They can’t say Sydenham did not turn it on for them’.<sup>176</sup> Indeed, the Duke himself pointed out the various home decorations to the Queen, delighting residents.<sup>177</sup>

Such decorations could erupt out of other parts of the city as well, even though the Queen would not be seeing them. Mr. J. M. Cronin, of 156 Slater Street, St. Albans, was described as ‘[o]ne of the proudest gardeners in the city’. In his flowerbed planning, he had been able to produce a Union Jack, a Royal crest and the words ‘God Save the Queen’!<sup>178</sup> No doubt the most impressive of these decorated gardens was that of Reginald Stilwell, 70 Selwyn Street (Figure 18). His ‘Garden of Goodwill’ contained a New Zealand flag, two Union Jacks, kiwiana maps of New Zealand on plates, a portrait of the Queen, red, white and blue streamers, a sign reading ‘God Save the Queen’, ribbons, and along a specially constructed

<sup>172</sup> T. D. Lennie, ‘Garden Notes’, *The Press*, 22 January 1954

<sup>173</sup> ‘Royal Visit’, *The Press*, 18 January 1954

<sup>174</sup> ‘Queen’s Inspection of Factory’, *The Press*, 15 January 1954

<sup>175</sup> ‘Sydenham Shows its Loyalty’, *CSS*, 20 January, 1954

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> ‘Decorations Draw Royal Praise on Drive to Inspect Factory’, *CSS*, 20 January 1954; ‘Public Investiture; Factory Tour’, *The Press*, 21 January 1954

<sup>178</sup> ‘St Albans Man Has ‘Royal Visit’ Garden’, *CSS*, 9 January, 1954

frame by his front fence the words 'Haere Mai'. Fern fronds and silver crowns completed the garish picture. The garden was an important stage on which to prove loyalty to the Crown.



**Figure 18: 'Reginald Stilwell's Garden of Good Hope' by Stan McKay**  
**Source: Ref 1980.192.42, CM**

This does not, however, prove that beyond temporary and scattered effusions the daily lives of Christchurch citizens reflected an entrenched recolonial attitude. Merivale and Fendalton made a strong effort to mark the occasion of the Queen's visit by beautifying their gardens, even though the Queen would probably not see them. Sydenham residents produced quite different displays once they knew the Queen would see them. In newspaper reports these were painted as naïve attempts of the lower orders to show a lively, though tasteless, fidelity. One correspondent, in defence of Sydenham, wrote that it 'is characteristic of the Royal Family to be ever solicitous for the poor', who had 'natural restraint and informality'.<sup>179</sup> One man, when quizzed about the flags he had erected in his garden confessed to not knowing which nationalities they denoted, but thought they looked colourful.<sup>180</sup> This fitted the Christchurch mythology perfectly, where egalitarianism was vaunted while social delineation was subtly marked out. In a similar way, much was made of the fact that at the Royal Garden Party about 2000 of the guests had been selected by ballot so that the Queen could really meet the people. More interestingly, the point was made that the site for the Party was the public domain, and not one of the stately homes.<sup>181</sup> Jim McAloon has remarked that the royal visit in fact marked

<sup>179</sup> Citizen, 'Royal Visit', *The Press*, 18 January 1954

<sup>180</sup> 'Sydenham Shows its Loyalty', *CSS*, 20 January 1954

<sup>181</sup> 'Royal Garden Party: Brilliant Social Occasion', *The Press*, 21 January 1954

‘the marginalisation of the old elite’.<sup>182</sup> Whatever the case, despite the egalitarian rhetoric, this examination of gardens highlights the fact that ‘loyalism’ of different varieties, and possibly of different qualities found expression in gardens of different kinds, located in very specific parts of the city.

## Conclusion

Efforts to enlist home gardeners in the beautification of Christchurch commenced in 1864, with the changed emphasis of the exhibitions to flowers and pot plants, and then to the gardens of the working classes. The establishment of the Christchurch Beautifying Association in 1897 coincided with an apparently widespread interest in roses, chrysanthemums and other plants whose purpose was beautification. The exhibitions focussed attention on workers’ dwellings, and the Sydenham and Addington horticultural shows served to underline the point emphatically up to 1900. The application of the Garden City epithet to Christchurch in 1906 reflected concerns with worker welfare and behaviour more than a general, unfocused, appreciation of a beautiful city.

Home garden competitions, in a similar, but far more direct way, aimed to transform both gardens and people into exemplars. Winning gardens were truly heterotopic, in the sense that they were ‘designed into the very institution of society... sorts of actually realized utopias’, as Foucault put it. The belief associated with them was that they would exert an influence on others’ gardens, and to an extent, this was the case. Winning gardens clustered together in different parts of the city, creating garden suburbs over time. The absolute apex of the beautiful Garden City occurred in 1954 when the Queen visited but, interestingly, while assistance with flower production seemed to come from all quarters, it was only in Merivale and Fendalton that winning gardens were to be found. Sydenham gardens, however, were once again the choice for demonstrating important characteristics of the city. The working classes were seen to have a strong sense of civic pride.

These two chapters have argued that gardening discourse as expressed in newspapers and by the Horticultural Society in particular, have shown a focus on labourers’ gardens. In the first period up to 1864 such gardens were meant to be sites of abundance – overflowing with fruit and vegetables. In the second period, from 1864 onwards, gardens were meant to be sites of beauty. In both periods, examples of ‘good’ gardening were provided, first by the horticultural exhibitions and then by judging of the gardens themselves. Some citizens

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<sup>182</sup> Jim McAloon, ‘The Christchurch Elite’, in Cookson and Dunstall (eds), p.216

participated in these competitions, making the ideal a reality. Such citizens were publicly rewarded for their efforts, amplifying their function as models. Their gardens were 'paragons'. It is not clear from such an analysis the extent to which other gardeners followed the examples set for them.

These chapters have also suggested that the modelling of 'good' gardening conduct was related to the expression of power. In the first phase, the abundance of the new gardens replaced the abundance of the wetland environment, and contributed to the undermining of Maori economies. Settler gardens did not just transplant new forms of horticulture into a vacuum, they displaced existing forms of economic power. In the second phase, 'beauty' was meant to overwrite these notions of settler self-sufficiency, again displacing an economic system, now in the hands of the labouring classes. It is significant that in 1866, William Wilson became president of the Horticultural Society and that he became Mayor of Christchurch in 1868, a year before the first home garden competitions. This mirrored the original situation, where Godley was the Agent of the Canterbury Association and president of the Horticultural Society's predecessor. Similarly, from 1899 Robert Heaton Rhodes became the Society's president, the same year he began his long parliamentary career. The 1860s, when beautification became the thrust of the Society's activities, saw the withdrawal of Ngai Tahu from the city area – after their claims to the Native Land Court came to nothing. I am arguing here that the brands of gardening promoted, at least in the nineteenth century, helped underpin structures of power in the Canterbury colony, and particularly in the city area. 'Paragon plots' assisted in the maintenance of the social order.

## 4

# Protection

### Introduction

Despite the attention paid by gardening promoters to beautification, the pre-European environment never disappeared entirely. Into the early twentieth century it continued to pose settlement problems. The swamps, and associated sanitary issues, were foremost amongst these. Native vegetation was a prominent characteristic of Christchurch until quite late, exciting botanists like Cockayne and Brown. Other botanists went further afield, gathering native plants from Christchurch's hinterlands, particularly the mountains, and bringing them into the city. Such 'novelties' created interest at horticultural shows.

Increasingly, native plants were seen as markers of difference. Like the Maori exhibited at the 1906 to 1907 International Exhibition, native plants allowed for something new to be imagined. The domestication of native plants into gardens – particularly the ubiquitous cabbage tree – spoke not only of their conquest, but also of their survival. They were part of the new era. In the process a reimagining of identity was occurring. New Zealand gardens were therefore antipodean, 'both here and there'. Christchurch, predominantly flat, did not seem prone to the native plant craze observable in other parts of the country. Nevertheless, the period 1925-1935 did see a sudden increase in interest this subject, as suburban expansion encroached onto the Port Hills and the extension of the railway to Arthur's Pass and beyond exposed city-dwellers to the Southern Alps, and their environmental degradation, in greater numbers than hitherto. These were the years of getting 'back to nature', and they had a pronounced effect on gardening literature.

### Suburban Alps

Ngaio Marsh, who lived both in Fendalton and on Cashmere, came close to articulating this paradox. She remembered 'boating on the quiet river where one glided through unknown people's gardens, under willows and between the spring-flowering banks of our curiously English antipodean suburbs.'<sup>1</sup> It was an uneasy assertion: curious. Likewise, Christmas 'was

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<sup>1</sup> Ngaio Marsh, *Black Beech and Honeydew* (London, 2002 ed.), p.36

a strange mixture of snow and intense heat'.<sup>2</sup> As well as stories of reindeer and frozen roads, it was also 'home-made toboggans that shot like greased lightening down the glossy, midsummer tussock: hot, still evenings, the lovely smell of cabbage-tree blossom...'<sup>3</sup> The mountains 'were often in my mind', she wrote, 'and, from our windows at home, before my eyes.'<sup>4</sup> When she visited them during World War One, she thought 'My country',<sup>5</sup> hugged a native beech tree in 'an agony of gratitude',<sup>6</sup> but was 'visited by this contradictory feeling of belonging and not-belonging'.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, discussing Allan Curnow's perspective, Pocock described 'an imagination which could never be fully at home where it was, could never fully return to where it might have come from, and had travelled too far to fly off and live anywhere else.'<sup>8</sup> This uneasy, 'antipodean', feeling, prompted for Marsh by the mountains, their birds and flora, was exactly the feeling underlying the specific competitions discussed in this chapter.



**Figure 19: 32 Edinburgh Street, Spreydon, showing generous planting of natives**  
**Source: Hean Collection, Canterbury Historical Association Collection, Ref: 2000.198.511, CHAC511, CM**

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.57

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p.58

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p.94

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.86

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p.12

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.86

<sup>8</sup> John Pocock, 'The Antipodean Perception', in *The Discovery of Islands* (Cambridge, 2005), p.11

Early on, some local plantmen saw environmental and commercial value in native fauna. Joseph (son of John) Armstrong's collections were reported in the newspaper, and often drew favourable comment at the horticultural exhibitions, as seen in Chapter Three. In 1864, for example, the 'youthful botanist' earned a guinea and a half for his 'collection of dried specimens of mosses and ferns' which 'was very complete, containing many new West Coast species not included in [Joseph] Hooker's last edition of the *Flora of New Zealand*.'<sup>9</sup> In 1872, he showed 180 ferns and fine foliaged plants, which received a lengthy write-up in the *Press*.<sup>10</sup> Ten years later, he was still exhibiting such specimens, though by now his exhibit also contained a variegated Japanese grass.<sup>11</sup> In 1884, Joseph Armstrong 'exhibited the peculiar Alpine plant known as the vegetable sheep'. Adams and Sons seed merchants, based in Christchurch, exhibited alpine plants at the same show.<sup>12</sup> This company dealt in alpine plants such as aciphyllas and alpine veronicas (hebes) in the 1880s, as they reported to Hooker.<sup>13</sup> By 1894 the company was promoting itself as the 'Establishment for New and Rare Plants', including native plants.<sup>14</sup> Murphy's 1895 edition of *Handbook for Gardening in New Zealand* included a section on native plants, the information for which had been supplied by Adams & Sons. Alpine plants for the rock garden featured.<sup>15</sup>

Kew, of course, was most interested in such discoveries, and John Armstrong, father of Joseph, had his own botanizing reported to Hooker. Julius von Haast wrote copious letters to Kew's Director in the 1860s, requesting specific plants for the new Government Domain in Christchurch and in return offering new discoveries. 'I send... a parcel of seeds, all collected by J. F. Armstrong... [later Government Gardener at the Christchurch Domain] I hope they will be of value to you and germinate.'<sup>16</sup> Two years later, in 1869, Armstrong was set to filling Wardian cases according to Hooker's wishes to send them back to Kew. 'I have procured for him [Armstrong]', wrote Haast, 'leave of absence... to go into the Alps in the proper season, to collect the live plants you want'.<sup>17</sup> Receiving more seed in 1870, Haast told Hooker: 'Armstrong... tells me he has got some more novelties.'<sup>18</sup> Adams and Sons wrote in 1886 to William Thiselton-Dyer, Hooker's successor as Kew's Director (and son-in-law)

<sup>9</sup> 'Horticultural Show', *The Press*, 2 March 1866

<sup>10</sup> 'Horticultural Society's Show', *The Press*, 1 March 1872

<sup>11</sup> 'Horticultural Society's Show', *The Press*, 3 March 1882

<sup>12</sup> 'Horticultural Society', *The Press*, 7 March 1884

<sup>13</sup> Adams and Sons to Hooker, August 15 1885, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, AJCP M744, Reel 15, ff1-18, SLV

<sup>14</sup> Adams and Sons to Kew, February 6 1894, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, AJCP M744, Reel 15, ff1-18, SLV

<sup>15</sup> M. Murphy, *Handbook for Gardening in New Zealand with a Section on Poultry and Bee-Keeping* (Christchurch, 1895), pp.168-171

<sup>16</sup> Julius von Haast to Hooker, August 1 1867, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, AJCP M745, Reel 16, f334, SLV

<sup>17</sup> Haast to Hooker, February 12 1869, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, AJCP M745, Reel 16, f352, SLV

<sup>18</sup> Haast to Hooker, June 28 1870, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, AJCP M745, Reel 16, f361, SLV

asking if he would retain all plants sent by Adams ‘likely to be of commercial importance’. These included the large-leaved forget-me-not and the alpine coprosmas, which would thrive in colder parts of England.<sup>19</sup> Thiselton-Dyer’s response is not recorded, but was no doubt favourable. He had overseen, after all, the construction of Kew’s own rock garden in 1881 and oversaw the adjacent Alpine House in 1887.

These exchanges continued into the 1920s. Sir Frederick Chapman posted seed of ‘a very attractive *Carmichaelia*’ to Arthur Hill, now Kew’s curator, in 1927, found near Franz Joseph glacier.<sup>20</sup> Hill communicated with Cockayne later that year, partly about certain *celmisias* and *clearias*, which seemed to be hybridizing in response to the opening up of shrubland, but also because Hill was likely to visit New Zealand in the near future. ‘[T]here is nothing I should enjoy more’, he wrote, ‘than seeing the New Zealand botanists and something of the vegetation of the country.’<sup>21</sup> Cockayne, delighted, suggested that he might ‘accompany you from Christchurch to the Franz Joseph glacier, walking from Arthur’s Pass railway station to Otira station via Arthur’s Pass & the Otira Gorge’, assuming Hill would want to see the high mountain vegetation.<sup>22</sup> The trip did eventuate, with a warm civic reception in Christchurch much hyped by the Canterbury Horticultural Society.<sup>23</sup> Hill was ‘more impressed with the West Coast than anywhere’.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps remembering the fate of the Armstrongs, who had been punished for their scientific approach to botany, Cockayne was pleased to report that Hill had ‘driven home a few truths about “botanic gardens”’.<sup>25</sup> It is significant that during Hill’s stay at Christchurch, he and Cockayne were the guests of Joseph Kinsey, on Clifton Hill, not only a hill garden itself, but one with a clear view to the Alps. The Southern Alps mattered a great deal to botanists and gardeners alike.

The Christchurch *Press* reported an English interest in New Zealand plants for rock gardens as early as 1900. *Mazus pumilo* was regarded in England as ‘a charming little New Zealand plant which thrives well in a rock garden, with its tiny violet flowers on stems but an inch in

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<sup>19</sup> Adams and Sons to Hooker, April 7 1886, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, AJCP M744, Reel 15, unnumbered item, *SLV*

<sup>20</sup> Frederick Chapman to Arthur Hill, received May 18 1927, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, AJCP M740, Reel 11, f208, *SLV*

<sup>21</sup> Hill to Leonard Cockayne, June 22 1927, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, AJCP M740, Reel 11, f289, *SLV*

<sup>22</sup> Cockayne to Hill, August 15 1927, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, AJCP M740, Reel 11, f290, *SLV*

<sup>23</sup> ‘Prominent Botanist to Tour Dominion. Dr Hill’s Visit from Kew’ *CB*, January 1928, p.1; ‘Kew and Empire’, *CB*, February 1928, p.21

<sup>24</sup> E. Phillips Turner to Joseph Kinsey, 4 February 1928, Kinsey, Sir Joseph James Papers, 1869-1935, Reel 2, ARCH 1991.14, *CM*

<sup>25</sup> Leonard Cockayne to Joseph Kinsey, 1 May 1928, Kinsey, Sir Joseph James Papers, 1869-1935, Reel 2, ARCH 1991.14, *CM*



height'.<sup>26</sup> Native plants featured at the International Exhibition of 1906 to 1907 in Hagley Park, capturing the imaginations of tourists.<sup>27</sup> In 1956 two species of the so-called New Zealand edelweiss were celebrated for their ability to perform well in such gardens, for example.<sup>28</sup> Rockeries, in which native alpine plants were supposed to feature, encapsulated English gardening interests, scientific and recreational preoccupations with mountains and fledgling attempts at national consciousness-raising. The English had a long-standing interest in the alpine plants of foreign countries. Percy Bysshe Shelley, for example, writing from Chamonix in the French Alps to his friend Peacock in 1816, mentioned that he had bought 'a large collection of all the seeds of rare Alpine plants, with their names written upon the outside of the papers that contain them. These I mean to colonise in my garden in England...'<sup>29</sup> Reginald Farrer's plant expeditions in mountainous regions of the exotic East, a century later, were thoroughly documented and reported on in the British journal *The Gardener's Chronicle*,<sup>30</sup> and are thought to have had an immense impact on the international development of rock gardening. The fate of his own Yorkshire rock garden, containing his Asian specimens, could still be lamented in the *Chronicle* in 1956.<sup>31</sup>

Rock gardening, with rare or unusual alpine plants, was thus a tradition well known to the British into which New Zealand plants could be easily inserted. Murphy's gardening advice for 1895 was full of enthusiasm for the native varieties; the suburban rock garden meant these could be seen more readily:

Few persons, except those who have visited the Alpine regions of New Zealand, have any idea of the beauty of the flora. It is therefore a matter of congratulation that [Adams & Sons] have commenced making a collection of those little-known but lovely Alpine plants and shrubs, many of which could be grown with ease in our gardens, thereby adding greatly to their beauty... In short, a collection of alpine plants is a never-ending source of interest; and looking forward to the time when the railway will pass through the heart of the ranges, the collection of the plants will be a great source of pleasure and relaxation.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> 'New Zealand Flowers Abroad', *The Press*, July 7 1900

<sup>27</sup> Indeed, interest in this had developed since 1905 when the idea of a fernery featuring 'nearly all [of] the varieties of ferns indigenous to New Zealand' had been touted by W. Jones of the Canterbury United Horticultural Society. See 'Horticulture at the Exhibition: Suggestions and Competitions', *The Press*, 1 March 1905. See also 'Editorial: Horticulture at the Exhibition', *The Press*, 1 March 1905. For a detailed description of the fernery, see James Cowan, *Official Record of the New Zealand International Exhibition of Arts and Industries held at Christchurch, 1906-7* (Wellington, 1910), pp.165-168

<sup>28</sup> R. Heath, 'The New Zealand Edelweiss', *GCGI*, April 21, 1956, p.424, *DO*

<sup>29</sup> Shelley to Peacock, in Edmund Blunden, *Shelley: A Life Story* (London, 1948), p.134

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, Reginald Farrer, 'Mr Reginald Farrer's Second Exploration in Asia', *GC*, February 7, 1920, p.66, *DO*

<sup>31</sup> W. Mitchell, 'Reginald Farrer's Rock Garden', *GCGI*, June 16, 1956, p.677, *DO*

<sup>32</sup> Murphy, pp. 168, 171

The New Zealand Alpine and Rock Garden Society in the 1920s was involved in plant-finding expeditions, but was also interested in obtaining exotic plants from Kew.<sup>33</sup> The first (1914) edition of David Tannock's *Manual of Gardening in New Zealand* contained a section on rock gardens although it did not explicitly mention New Zealand natives.<sup>34</sup> Tannock, as Leach has observed, emphasised in 1914 that the point of a rock garden was not only to provide habitat for interesting alpine plants, but also to actually create miniature Alps in the suburbs.<sup>35</sup> '[If] it is desired to hide an ugly or undesirable feature either in your own or your neighbour's garden,' he wrote, 'there is nothing so satisfactory as a miniature hill or a range of mountains.'<sup>36</sup> He continued:

The design of a rock garden will depend on its extent. If small, it is better to reproduce one mountain peak, sloping up irregularly; if space will permit two peaks can be formed with a ravine or shingle slip between, and this can be extended until a whole mountain range is reproduced. One can learn a lot from nature both in design and placing the stones, so that before commencing operations it is well to study a mountain range and to form a mental picture of what you mean to accomplish.<sup>37</sup>

There was not a consensus that native alpine plants were the most desirable. In 1910, the *Press* recommended Chinese plants for this purpose.<sup>38</sup> The *Press* gave details on how to construct a rockery, in response to a reader's enquiry, in 1920, but did not mention specific suitable plants,<sup>39</sup> while in 1929 and 1930 Jack Humm, J. T. Sinclair and Fawcett Clapperton wrote affectionately of campanulas, of southern and eastern European extraction.<sup>40</sup>

Generally speaking, however, from the 1920s a discernable interest in the uses of native plants for rockeries shifted to an unmistakable advocacy of native varieties. Whereas the period of most vigorous promotion of natives might have been assumed to coincide with the so-called 'Maoriland movement', roughly 1890-1914,<sup>41</sup> in fact it was the period immediately following that saw the greatest interest in native plants. Cockayne wrote enthusiastically about veronicas, and a host of other native plants in his seminal work of 1923, *The Cultivation of New Zealand Plants*. Noting that the veronicas were found in a host of

<sup>33</sup> A. Wilkinson to Hill, July 29 1928, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, AJCP M740, Reel 11, f347, SLV

<sup>34</sup> David Tannock, *Manual of Gardening in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1914), pp.65-68, 72-73

<sup>35</sup> Helen Leach, 'Exotic Natives and Contrived Wild Gardens: The Twentieth Century Home Garden', in Eric Pawson and Tom Brooking (eds), *Environmental Histories of New Zealand* (Melbourne, 2002), p.217

<sup>36</sup> Tannock, p.65

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p.68

<sup>38</sup> 'Garden Notes', *The Press*, 15 October 1910

<sup>39</sup> J. T. Sinclair, *The Press*, June 2 1920

<sup>40</sup> W. J. Humm, 'Alpine Campanulas: The Bell Flower', *CB*, April 1929, p.9; Sinclair, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 8 April 1930; Fawcett Clapperton, 'Autumn in the Rock Garden', *CB*, March 1930, p.7

<sup>41</sup> This should call into question the usefulness of 'Maoriland' as a clearly bracketed period. Not only was interest in New Zealand flora clearly in evidence from at least the 1860s, it continued well into the 1930s.

ecosystems, including ‘the great screes of the Southern Alps’, he argued for the ‘whipcord’ species to be used in ‘the alpine-garden’.<sup>42</sup> The Canterbury Horticultural Society promoted Cockayne’s book in a booklet of 1926.<sup>43</sup> Locally, *The City Beautiful* provides the clearest evidence for an increasing fascination with native plants, in particular native alpinists for use in rockeries. Almost every issue of this journal for 1928 to 1930 included articles on either rock gardens or alpine plants for rock gardens, usually natives.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, when Sir George Fenwick was asked to provide a guest editorial for a special ‘Rose Issue’ of the publication in 1928, he wrote that he would rather give ‘some references to the success with which our native Alpine plants are grown in Dunedin’. He concluded that he hoped the nurserymen ‘will spread their efforts to the systematic growing of the best of our Alpines. They are full of interest for lovers of our native vegetation, and ought to be found more freely in the private gardens of Christchurch’.<sup>45</sup> Other articles championed particular alpinists. ‘It has been proved that all, or almost all of these beautiful plants [celmisias or alpine daisies] will adapt themselves to the change of environment in our home gardens... Of late years, Celmisias are to be seen more and more frequently on our “rockeries”’.<sup>46</sup> Ivory Brothers’ catalogue for 1927 to 1928 included a list of native plants.<sup>47</sup> J. M. Baxter’s native plant catalogue for 1928 to 1929 mentioned a surprising 62 veronicas suitable for rock gardens.<sup>48</sup>

Morris Barnett, later organiser of the 1954 floral festivities for the Queen, advised that for rock gardens ‘one need not look beyond our own native plants for suitable subjects. The whipcord veronicas, dwarf Helichrysums, Pimelas, and last, but by no means least, the New Zealand pigmy pines... provide excellent specimens for this purpose.’<sup>49</sup> Baxter wrote articles for *The City Beautiful* about native plants<sup>50</sup> and, in an advertising coup provided a cup for

<sup>42</sup> Leonard Cockayne, *The Cultivation of New Zealand Plants* (Auckland, 1923), pp.62-63

<sup>43</sup> Canterbury Horticultural Society booklet, 1925-1926. Ivory Brothers Collection, Box B9 E5, MB

<sup>44</sup> A selection of the articles for 1928 should demonstrate this point adequately: ‘Mountain Daisies: Celmisia’, *CB*, January 1928, pp.14-17; ‘New Zealand Native Flora: Two Beautiful Flowers’, *CB*, March 1928, pp.10-11; C. Jones, ‘The Rock Garden’, *CB*, April 1928, pp.23-24; C. Jones, ‘The Rock Garden’, *CB*, May 1928, pp.20-22; C. Jones, ‘The Rock Garden’, *CB*, June 1928, pp.21-25; ‘Mountain Gardens: A Botanising Trip’, *CB*, June 1928, pp.27-29; J. Speden, ‘The Flora of Arthur’s Pass’, *CB*, July 1928, pp.11-13; C. Jones, ‘Plants Suitable for the Rock Garden’, *CB*, July 1928, p.27-29; A. Wilkinson, ‘Alpine and Rock Gardens’, *CB*, August 1928, pp.32-35; J. Speden, ‘The Flora of Arthur’s Pass’, *CB*, September 1928, pp.12-14; J. Speden, ‘The Flora of Arthur’s Pass’, *CB*, October 1928, pp.27-29; C. Reece, ‘Native Plants in Our Gardens’, *CB*, October 1928, pp.31-32; ‘New Zealand Native Veronicas’, *CB*, November 1928, pp.19-21; ‘Ranunculus Paucifolius’, *CB*, November 1928, p.20

<sup>45</sup> George Fenwick, ‘Some Plants of New Zealand and the Sub-Antarctic Islands’, *CB*, December 1928, pp.11,12

<sup>46</sup> ‘Mountain Daisies: Celmisia’, *CB*, January 1928, p.17

<sup>47</sup> Ivory Brothers Collection, B9 E5, MB

<sup>48</sup> J. M. Baxter, *Descriptive Catalogue of New Zealand Native Trees, Shrubs and Plants* (Christchurch, 1928), pp.21-22

<sup>49</sup> M. J. Barnett, ‘The Rock Garden’, *CB*, June 1930, p.24

<sup>50</sup> e.g. J. M. Baxter, ‘New Zealand Native Trees and Shrubs’, *CB*, April 1929, pp. 29-30;

native plants in the Canterbury Horticultural Society garden competitions for 1930.<sup>51</sup> From 1932 rock gardens were judged separately, and some brief descriptions of plant species, not always natives, in these gardens was given.<sup>52</sup>

James McPherson, while still at Invercargill in 1932, claimed that although he had ‘travelled through the Homeland’, ‘there is nothing that stirs or impresses me more than sitting on an old rotted log in parts of our New Zealand bush, whether lowland or highland, and drink deep of the beauties of the ferns around me...’<sup>53</sup> The *Press* reported in 1935 that ‘a number of Christchurch authorities’, including Lance McCaskill, agreed that ‘interest in the raising of native trees and shrubs has been making steady growth in the city over the last few years’. The Domain Board was ‘fully alive to the rising ‘feeling’ for native plants and trees’, stated the board’s chair, H. Kitson, and ‘the rearrangement of the New Zealand section of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens has been put in hand by the curator, Mr. J. A. McPherson.’ Morris Barnett had committed to planting more of the city’s reserves in natives. Mrs Poulton emphasised the usefulness of native alpine plants for rock gardens. Until lately, she believed, ‘English gardeners were more interested in our alpines than were New Zealanders, but nowadays there was a new appreciation of natives which was extending itself to the flora of the river-beds and shingle-beds of the high country’. She ‘mentioned dozens of species... which she had successfully grown in her rock-garden.’<sup>54</sup>

Yet from 1931 to 1932 *The City Beautiful*, while still maintaining a high number of articles on rock gardening, ceased to focus so greatly on native plants. By 1940 interest had declined to the point where only two articles on native plants were published for the entire year.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, in 1945 Caxton produced a booklet on native plants for rock gardens with a note from James McPherson, Christchurch Botanic Gardens curator, that ‘every New Zealander will take pride in the thought that the spirit of Leonard Cockayne still lives’. The booklet featured photos from the Cockayne Memorial Garden in the Christchurch Botanic

<sup>51</sup> ‘Christchurch Home Gardens Competition’, *CB*, February 1930, p.24

<sup>52</sup> ‘Christchurch Home Gardens Competitions, 1932’, *CB*, December 1931, p.25; ‘Canterbury Horticultural Society: Presentation of Trophies’, *CB*, February 1933, p.10; ‘CHS Garden Competitions’, *CB*, May 1934, p.24; *CB*, December 1934, p.12; ‘Gardens’ Competitions’, *CB*, April 1935, p.7; ‘Canterbury Horticultural Society’s Garden Competitions’, *CB*, April 1940, p.20; ‘Hill Gardens Competitions’, *CB*, November 1943, p.15

<sup>53</sup> J. A. McPherson, untitled paper, 1932, ‘Ferns and Ferneries’, CH 335, Box 22, Item /23, *ANZCRO*

<sup>54</sup> ‘City’s Gardens: Native Shrubs Popular in Christchurch’, *The Press*, 1 February 1935

<sup>55</sup> ‘Alpine Aciphyllas’, *CB*, April 1940, p.14; Lance McCaskill, ‘Manuka’, *CB*, December 1940, pp.12-14

Gardens.<sup>56</sup> Rock gardens did not figure in the Horticultural Society competitions by 1950,<sup>57</sup> but they were still mentioned in the *Press* gardening column that year.<sup>58</sup>

## Southern Alps

Christchurch gardens therefore incorporated native plants. The most fashionable were alpinists, although other species were acclaimed for their beauty. The rock garden was a miniature mountain, onto which native plants could, and from the 1920s to the mid 1930s *should* be planted. This shift is strong evidence for a new sense of identity expressed in the Christchurch garden, and was motivated in part by a changing relationship with the mountains. Pakeha attention had shifted by this stage from a desire to remove forest and replace it with new farms and settlements, to an anxiety, felt throughout the British Empire, about the relationship between deforestation and climate change, to a panic regarding its cause of sheet erosion.<sup>59</sup> In 1913, for example, Cockayne had written up the findings of the Royal Commission on Forestry, and found that there were:

...few countries in the world... more in need of an adequate forest covering on their high lands than is New Zealand. The lofty mountain-ranges which traverse both Islands and the excessively broken nature of the land in many places, together with an average high rainfall, lead to the presence of innumerable streams, and offer ideal conditions for denudation. In other words, the mountains and hills of New Zealand would, if not forest-clad, be a constant source of danger to the farm lands on which the prosperity of the Dominion so greatly depends.<sup>60</sup>

Farming was still essential, but to preserve it indiscriminate deforestation had to cease. For some, the intrinsic value of native flora was equally valued. Nor was this concern entirely new. The Beautifying Association, of which Cockayne was a founding member, concerned itself in 1900 with the preservation of Kennedy's Bush, to 'provide a haven of refuge for our

<sup>56</sup> James McPherson, 'Foreward', in W. B. Brockie, 'New Zealand Alpines in Field and Garden' (Christchurch, 1945), *CCL*

<sup>57</sup> 'Home Garden Competition Results, 1950', *CB*, March 1950, p.4; rock gardens are not mentioned in the results for 1954, either: 'Home and Factory Gardens', *CB*, p.9

<sup>58</sup> T.D. Lennie 'Gardening Notes', *The Press*, 10 March 1950; Lennie, 'Gardening Notes', *The Press*, 9 January 1950

<sup>59</sup> For contemporaneous scholarship, see Gordon Jacks and Robert Whyte, *The Rape of the Earth: A World Survey of Soil Erosion* (London, 1939); Albert Howard, *An Agricultural Testament* (London, 1940), esp Ch.10, 'Some Diseases of the Soil'; H. Massingham (ed.), *England and the Farmer: A Symposium* (London, 1941). See also Lance McCaskill, *Hold this Land: A History of Soil Conservation in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1973); Gregory Barton, 'Empire Forestry and the Origins of Environmentalism', *Journal of Historical Geography*, Vol.27, No.4, 2001, pp.529-552; Gregory Barton, 'Sir Albert Howard and the Forestry Roots of the Organic Farming Movement', *Agricultural History*, Vol.75, No.2, 2001, pp.168-187; James Beattie, 'Environmental Anxiety in New Zealand, 1840-1941: Climate Change, Soil Erosion, Sand Drift, Flooding and Forest Conservation', *Environment & History*, Vol.9, No.4, 2003, pp.379-392

<sup>60</sup> 'Royal Commission on Forestry', *AJHR*, 1913, pp.xiv-xv

New Zealand birds now rapidly becoming things of the past, and where also might be conserved and gathered together all kinds of native trees and plants...'.<sup>61</sup> It was this moment that inspired Harry Ell, champion of the reservation of Kennedy's Bush, to commit to Port Hills conservation issues.<sup>62</sup> In 1906 the Beautifying Association became involved with the public ownership of Riccarton Bush.<sup>63</sup> In 1908, it was responsible for planting twenty-one cabbage trees 'near the Convalescent Home, on the Cashmere Hills'.<sup>64</sup> The major move in this direction, however, occurred in 1923 when the New Zealand Native Birds Protection Society was established to avert 'dire calamities' should the native forest fail.<sup>65</sup> Michael Roche has pointed out this organisation's preoccupation with soil erosion throughout the 1930s;<sup>66</sup> this had been developing in the 1920s and continued well into the 1940s.<sup>67</sup>

While post-World War Two suburban development further threatened bird habitat, the Society promoted the objective of 'planting in private gardens, including suburban gardens... native trees and vegetation that come within the definition of providing food and shelter for indigenous birds... [A]lmost every suburban or provincial garden can be made to figure in the bird-attracting campaign.'<sup>68</sup> A 1936 article in *Forest and Bird* hoped that New Zealanders would shake off their 'caged' mentality and incorporate more natural elements in their gardens. 'There has been a change from a passive possession of an area of land about a house for lawns and shrubs and flowers, to a positive and active desire to do all possible to attract into gardens colonies of songsters and feathered friends.'<sup>69</sup> The 'natural' world was invited into the garden by these individuals, not shut out, in order in some way to recover the 'Lost Avian Paradise'.<sup>70</sup> New Zealand had become.

By 1920, the perception of New Zealand as a fragile environment characterised by denuded mountains eroding into the ocean was reflected in suburban gardening literature. *The City Beautiful*, when writing about interesting species, often noted that the natural areas from

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<sup>61</sup> 'Reservation of Native Bush', *The Press*, 4 June 1900

<sup>62</sup> Gordon Ogilvie, *The Port Hills of Christchurch* (Wellington, 1978), p.212

<sup>63</sup> Christchurch Beautifying Association Minute Book, 26 February 1906, Vol.1, pp.11-12, *CM*

<sup>64</sup> Christchurch Beautifying Association Minute Book, 1 September 1908, Vol.1, p.73; 'Chairman's Report', p.84, *CM*

<sup>65</sup> E. V. Anderson, 16 April 1923, in *F&B*, No.31, 1933

<sup>66</sup> Michael Roche, 'The State as Conservationist, 1920-1960: 'Wise Use' of Forests, Lands, and Water', in Pawson and Brooking (eds), pp.191-192

<sup>67</sup> For example, one of the Society's earliest pieces of correspondence stated that 'Civilization and progress would end with the depletion of the soil and the great increase of insect life. This is especially applicable to mountainous countries like New Zealand, where erosion is severe.' E. V. Sanderson, April 1924 (included in Vol.1 of the Society's publication)

<sup>68</sup> 'Bird and Man: Housing Competition', *F&B*, February 1947, p.3

<sup>69</sup> 'Gardens for Songsters – Cages for Criminals! How Gardeners May be Hosts of Sweet-Singing Guests', *F&B*, May 1936, p.11

<sup>70</sup> Wanderer, 'Lost Avian Paradise', *F&B*, August 1946, p.3

which these plants came were being destroyed by farmers and tourists, some of whom were also suburban plant collectors. In the 1928 article on *Celmisias* mentioned above, the author commented that on Titan Ridge in Otago's Garvie Mountains one could

walk, or ride, through *Celmisia Lyallii* for a couple of miles, and the plants are growing so closely together, as almost to touch each other. On the opposite side of the Ridge, *C. Coriacea* – probably the king of *Celmisias* – must cover hundreds of acres, making the mountain slope one unbroken sheet of snowy whiteness! The reason why there is such abundance here is that the owner of this "Run" is not an advocate of "burning" as a factor in the improvement of sheep pasture. Would that all runholders were imbued with the same principles! It would remove the menace that before many years are passed nowhere but in the inaccessible places will any evidence of our beautiful native flora be seen.<sup>71</sup>

In 1930, an article on *Clematis indivisa* noted that whereas it had once been common on the Port Hills, '[t]wenty-five years of tussock burning... have robbed us of the bush and of its clematis.'<sup>72</sup> If farmers were destroying native plants, gardeners, by implication, should cultivate them.

Tourists were also a menace. G. R. Butler of Arthur's Pass wrote to *The City Beautiful* in April 1928 to express concerns about tourism, a major issue with the opening in 1923 of the Otira Tunnel through the Alps to the West Coast. Stating that the area needed to be 'protected from vandalism', he said the 20,000 annual visitors had subjected it to 'spoliation and destruction'. '[It] is not too much to say that the native plant life and beauty of the most accessible parts are in grave danger of being irreparably damaged.' He continued:

Some parts most easy of access have already been practically denuded of plant life. A particular example of this can be seen on a spur just off the road on the Otira side of the White bridge which was, a few years ago, a veritable garden of *Celmisia Coriacea*. Now all that is left is but a few of the poorer plants.

Butler argued that the 'protection and development of the Arthur's Pass National Park is a matter of deep concern to Canterbury, and particularly to the city of Christchurch... possessed of some of the finest Alpine scenery in the world.'<sup>73</sup> A full report regarding the establishment of a Board of Control for the National Park was included in the same issue.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>71</sup> 'Mountain Daisies: *Celmisia*', *CB*, January 1928, p.17

<sup>72</sup> Samuel Page, 'Our Native Flora: Species of *Clematis* in the Vicinity of Christchurch', *CB*, June 1930, p.5

<sup>73</sup> G. Butler, 'Arthur's Pass National Park', *CB*, April 1928, p.17

<sup>74</sup> 'National Park at Arthur's Pass: A Board of Control', *CB*, April 1928, pp.19-21

Soon after, this area was said to boast ‘the finest natural rock gardens in the world’.<sup>75</sup> James Speden warned gardeners against indiscriminate plant collecting in the area which would ultimately ruin ‘one of the most beautiful and interesting walks in New Zealand’.<sup>76</sup> A. Tyndall’s article, ‘The Destruction of Our Native Flora’, treated the issue somewhat more directly.<sup>77</sup> The same criticism was levelled at gardeners in the *Press* in 1935: gardeners should collect seeds, not plants, from nature.<sup>78</sup>

There was, in other words, a direct relationship between the mountains and Christchurch gardens in this period. Indeed, Morris Barnett undertook development of the rock garden at Arthurs Pass to be ‘of sufficient dimensions to accommodate a representative collection of the alpine flora of the Arthur’s Pass region.’<sup>79</sup> As Kitson noted in 1935,

today’s interest in natives had been stimulated by the fact that train and automobile had brought mountain and bush districts within easy reach of Christchurch. People who saw shrubs and plants growing in their native habitat could not but realise the beauty and wonder of our native flora, hence there was an increasing desire to cultivate specimens in private gardens.<sup>80</sup>

Speden had made the same point in 1929: ‘To see these plants in their natural habitat on the tops of those rocky ridges, imbues us with the desire for a similar rockery in our gardens, a transfer of our mountain ideals.’<sup>81</sup> These rock gardens with their native flora were different from rock gardens with indiscriminate flora. They were mimetic landscapes, anchored in local circumstance. They were not facsimiles, but they captured ‘mountain ideals’, viewed as being under threat.

This was an unintended flipside of the ‘back to nature’ movement, where ‘the popularity of camping and the great outdoors soared. Cars allowed people to venture on camping holidays and to take snapshots of indigenous scenery.’<sup>82</sup> Donald Denoon and Philippa Mein Smith have suggested that during the Depression years the settler societies of New Zealand and Australia ‘were identifying with and claiming their own landscapes.’<sup>83</sup> Indeed motorcar

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<sup>75</sup> ‘Mountain Gardens: A Botanising Trip’, *CB*, June 1928, p28

<sup>76</sup> James Speden, ‘The Flora of Arthur’s Pass’, *CB*, October 1928, p.29

<sup>77</sup> A. Tyndall, ‘The Destruction of Our Native Flora’, *CB*, June 1929, pp.12-15

<sup>78</sup> ‘City’s Gardens: Native Shrubs Popular in Christchurch’, *The Press*, 1 February 1935

<sup>79</sup> Report from M. J. Barnett to Arthur’s Pass National Park Board, late 1938 or early 1939, Arthur’s Pass National Park Board, ‘Alpine and Rock Gardening 1938-1964’, CH 134, Box 950, Item APB 15/2

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> James Speden, ‘Veronica Dasyphylla: One of the Choicest Gems of our New Zealand Native Flora’, *CB*, May 1929, p.26

<sup>82</sup> Donald Denoon and Philippa Mein Smith, *A History of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific* (Oxford, 2000), p.302

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p.302



dealers employed 'Back to Nature' as a slogan.<sup>84</sup> Getting back to nature was essentially an antidote to degenerative urban living, emulating a German example,<sup>85</sup> but in this period of 'anxious peace',<sup>86</sup> worried urbanites now also encountered degraded hinterland.

The major debate about soil erosion through the 1930s climaxed around 1940, by which time it had shifted in meaning for garden writers from native vegetation to relative humic content of soils. However, *Forest and Bird* continued to make the link, and local interest appears to have remained strong. Lance McCaskill publicised subjects of erosion and the role of native flora in its prevention in the *Press* in 1940. Particularly important were his regular articles for the 'Press Junior', written for older children and prompting feedback from adults.<sup>87</sup> Specific references to Christchurch in the *Forest and Bird Society's* publication to 1954 were few, however. Most references of cities were to Wellington, Auckland and Dunedin. Where Christchurch gardens were mentioned, they were usually hill gardens. Baxter's Tawhai Nursery was one of these. Situated on Mount Pleasant, it covered three acres. 'Mr. Baxter's garden', wrote McCaskill, 'is an excellent example of the results of planting "bird food" and supplying fresh drinking water. Birds are with him all the year round...'<sup>88</sup> McCaskill, later author of *Hold This Land: A History of Soil Conservation in New Zealand*,<sup>89</sup> was branch Chair.

Meeting attendance was usually between 40 and 160 (1948 to 1950), with some meetings reaching 200 (in August 1950), 350 or even (in 1953, on Mt Pleasant) more than 400 attendees.<sup>90</sup> Not every meeting reported a number for its attendances, but gaps were usually due to meeting numbers being too high to count easily. The August 1948 meeting, for example, had an 'excellent' attendance. That of April 1951 had a 'filled hall'. In October 1951 there was a full hall, with 'scores turned away'. July 1952 had a 'full house'; August 1952 had a full hall, with '40 turned away'. February 1953 was 'very full', April 1953 had a 'full house', February 1954 St Andrew's Church Hall was 'completely full' with members turned away. Indeed the branch felt so confident about its attendances that for a film

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<sup>84</sup> See, for example, *The Press*, 17 January 1930, with a five page feature on motor cars and such headlines as 'Camping with the Car, the Simple Life: Back to Nature' and 'Revel in Health-Giving Sunshine by Countryside and Sea'

<sup>85</sup> 'Back to Nature: Youth Movement in Germany', *The Press*, 22 January 1930

<sup>86</sup> The phrase is borrowed from Denoon and Mein Smith, Ch.14

<sup>87</sup> 'Editorial', *The Press*, 20 March 1940, and McCaskill's reply to adults, 'Soil Erosion: Investigation and Control in Ohio, A Lesson for New Zealand', *The Press*, 20 March 1940. The first 'Nature Notes' preserved with the main section of *The Press* is for part five of McCaskill's six part series on 'Our Tussock Grasslands', on 'Soil Erosion', *The Press*, 13 April 1940. McCaskill's 'Nature Notes' usually featured a native plant.

<sup>88</sup> McCaskill, 'Growth Rate of Native Trees Under Cultivation', *F&B*, May 1940, pp.8-10

<sup>89</sup> McCaskill, *Hold This Land: A History of Soil Conservation in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1973)

<sup>90</sup> *F&B*, August 1953, p.13

screening in July 1954 it booked the Repertory Theatre ‘which seats 700’, and had a ‘large attendance’.<sup>91</sup> The high level of local interest is also clearly demonstrated in numbers attending field days, frequently in excess of 200.

Occasionally, the possibilities of gardens featured. In November 1950, for example, a field trip took members to two gardens on the hills:

Opportunity was taken to visit the garden on Scarborough Hill, of Mr. H. Bailey, a keen member of the Society, where on the sun-baked, wind-blown hillside he has over the last 30 years developed a remarkable garden with New Zealand natives doing extraordinarily well under difficult conditions. The garden of Mr. W. Machin was also visited to see two fine specimens of the puka (*Meryta Sinclair [sinclairii]*)...<sup>92</sup>

Gardens of most interest to members appeared to be those associated with the hills. The principal driving force of the Forest and Bird Society regarding Christchurch was to see the cityscape reflecting more of the original ecological associations, and encourage bird life back to the space that had been teeming with birds a century earlier.

### **Hill Garden Competitions**

Apart from the stimulus the Otira Tunnel gave to alpine collecting and therefore to rock gardening, another stimulus was the suburban subdivision of Port Hills farms. The hills, as seen in Chapter Two, were not only sloping of course, but were abundant with volcanic rocks. Combined, these factors lent themselves to rock gardening. Most of the reports about rock gardens were about hill gardens. In order to cater to the growing numbers of people living on the hills, with completely different ecological conditions to those on ‘the flat’, the Canterbury Horticultural Society initiated a hill garden competition in 1929. In 1931 C. H. Reece wrote that to ‘wrest from the barren hillside a beautiful garden was a work worthy of the greatest endeavour, and requires skill, patience and intelligent study beyond the average, and quite unknown and probably unappreciated by the makers of gardens on the plains below.’<sup>93</sup> The Sumner and Redcliffs Beautifying Association ran a separate competition, at the suggestion of the Horticultural Society, also from 1929. This featured both hill and flat gardens in the area. One of these gardens – where the owner had ‘terraced and walled in a wilderness’ – was ‘an amazing contrast to the bare tussock of ten years ago.’<sup>94</sup> It would be quite wrong to claim that

<sup>91</sup> See ‘Quarterly Newsletter’ in *F&B*: November 1948; August 1950; May 1951; February 1952; May 1952; November 1952; May 1953; August 1953; May 1954; November 1954

<sup>92</sup> ‘Quarterly Newsletter, *F&B*, February 1951, p.11

<sup>93</sup> C. H. Reece, ‘The Port Hills “Home Gardens” Competitions’, *CB*, December 1931, p.17

<sup>94</sup> ‘Sumner and Redcliffs Garden Competitions’, *CB*, January 1930, p.9

the hill gardens featured in *The City Beautiful* only contained native plants. One of the main themes of this material is the emphasis placed on botanical eclecticism. The Clifton judges of the Sumner/ Redcliffs competition of 1929, were 'struck with the wonderful prospects afforded by the sub-tropical climate'.

In one was found the finest puriri in Canterbury, together with great tree ferns, lemon trees, the pohutukawa, a splendid *Quercus Ilex* (Holm or Evergreen Oak) and specimens from South Africa and Mexico. Several plots were furnished with samples of vegetation representing the whole world.<sup>95</sup>

Jack Humm, in his report, made the comment that 'the climate is very favourable to sub-tropical trees and shrubs, and many rare and beautiful subjects grow and flower most luxuriantly there...'. A Clifton Bay garden had plants 'drawn from the four corners of the earth... growing together in perfect harmony.'<sup>96</sup> Mrs Scott's garden at Clifton was 'a living example of the possibilities of Clifton as a garden suburb', and she could 'truly claim to be a citizen of the world, for as she walks round her truly delightful garden, she can see almost every country represented. Australian and Peruvian plant families seem particularly to enjoy the Clifton climate...'<sup>97</sup> W. J. Sim's Clifton garden sported Australian 'Grevilleas, Callistemons, Acacias, Eutaxias, and numerous others of her noble band', along with South African proteas, Californian prickly pear and 'several others of the cactus tribe'.<sup>98</sup> Reece reported on the 1931 hill gardens competition that the winning garden sported lawns 'velvety green and in perfect order' and one large border consisting of 'a background of hydrangeas, rhododendrons and Japanese maples, with a foreground of the evergreen azaleas, the whole being underplanted with polyanthus and pansies.'<sup>99</sup> H. Bailey's winning garden situated on the hill at Scarborough displayed 'vegetables, fruit, ferns, native trees, a gay showing of coloured banks, with the fruit trees trained in espalier manner', while Boulton's, of Richmond Hill, won points for 'flowers, vegetables, terraced effects, herbaceous borders, and exotics'.<sup>100</sup>

Similarly, in Cashmere, Lyndsay Russell's winning garden contained an impressive rockery, planted in 'a large number of the latest low-growing Azaleas'.<sup>101</sup> Although the results failed to mention it, this garden, Holmhurst, was designed by Alfred Buxton in 1925.<sup>102</sup> Macmillan Brown wrote at length about the exotics in his garden, especially those from Australia, South

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p.8

<sup>96</sup> W. J. Humm, 'Delightful Gardens at Sumner and Redcliffs', *CB*, February 1930, pp.9

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p.10

<sup>98</sup> C. H. Reece, "'Te Kiteroa'", *CB*, November 1928, p.23

<sup>99</sup> Reece, 'The Port Hills "Home Gardens" Competitions', *CB*, December, 1931, p.17

<sup>100</sup> 'Sumner Garden Competitions', *CB*, December 1935, p.26

<sup>101</sup> "'Holmhurst": A Charming Residence at Cashmere', *CB*, April 1928, p.11

<sup>102</sup> Rupert Tipples, *Colonial Landscape Gardener: Alfred Buxton of Christchurch, New Zealand, 1872-1950* (Lincoln, 1989), p.93

Africa, Japan, China, North and South America and the Pacific.<sup>103</sup> That is to say a special feature of the hill gardens, and particularly of those near the sea at Sumner, was their ability to produce unique effects as a result of being largely frost-free. The ‘internationalism’ that could be featured there was one special characteristic and, as will have been noted, seemed little affected by any special devotion to English favourites, or even of plants found exclusively within the Empire. The globalised garden was ‘in’.

Despite this, another major theme of these gardens was their particular interest in native plants. The comment on the Sumner and Redcliffs 1929 competition pointed out that ‘[m]ost of the hill gardens, including that of Mrs Gordon Stevens, of Monck’s Spur, fully exploited the usefulness and beauty of native trees and shrubs, and few gardens were without the popular kowhai’.<sup>104</sup> At Clifton, Sim’s garden featured the New Zealand lilac, along with ‘[m]any native plants’.<sup>105</sup> Ferns could win competitions on their own account; and Mr. T. Smart’s winning Cashmere garden (Figure 20) shows graphically how gardens could replicate native forest.<sup>106</sup>



**Figure 20: T. Smart’s Winning Garden, 416 Ashgrove Terrace, Cashmere**  
 Source: *CB*, April 1931  
 (Reprinted courtesy of the Canterbury Horticultural Society)

<sup>103</sup> John Macmillan Brown, ‘Professor Macmillan Brown’s Garden at Cashmere’, *CB*, March 1928, pp.3-5

<sup>104</sup> ‘Sumner and Redcliffs Garden Competition’, p.9

<sup>105</sup> Reece, “‘Te Kiteroa’”, p.23

<sup>106</sup> *CB*, April 1931, pp.11, 13

Macmillan Brown's garden was self-described in detail over two issues of the publication; the first installment focussed entirely on the native plants, including those that grew over his rockeries.

Not quite so conspicuous [as *Heeria rosea*], but as fine in their foliage are the creeping veronicas like Bidwilli, Lyalli and Olseni. There are exotic creeping veronicas that are quite as pretty, like veronica prostrata. But the most beautiful of all the veronicas is Hulkeana var. Fairfieldi [probably the New Zealand lilac], with its long sprays of white flowers. It is one of the most graceful of low flowering plants, billowing over the earth or rock as no other native plant does.<sup>107</sup>

In these articles about hill gardens exotic plants featured, and in most instances it was their exoticness that was celebrated; the co-mingling of internationally-derived species was considered significant, not merely the plants themselves. At the same time, native plants were accorded a special importance – these plants were graceful, charming, delicate, and their indigeneity was what marked them out as worthy of attention. For judges of hill garden competitions, native plants were considered important, but in a context of internationalism.

Entries for the more general Hill Garden competition went into terminal decline from 1946.<sup>108</sup> In 1947 the journal reported that 'For some strange reason the number of entrants in the Hill Garden Competitions judged on November 5 was very small. The season has been good and interest in this type of garden is well maintained, so that it is difficult to find a good reason for the paucity of entries.'<sup>109</sup> Again, in 1948, it was noted that 'For some unaccountable reason there has been a falling off in the entries in these contests.'<sup>110</sup> In 1949: 'It is unfortunate that so few hill and rock gardens consider it worth while to enter for the annual competition.'<sup>111</sup> In 1951 things were more dire: 'The Society's Committee is anxious to see more entries, in order that the Hill Gardens Competition may be continued. Without more competition the Society may be compelled, reluctantly enough, to abandon it.'<sup>112</sup> This overall lack of interest in competition from hill gardens, despite promising beginnings, is useful in understanding the motivations of these gardeners, explored in more detail in Chapter Nine.

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<sup>107</sup> John Macmillan Brown, 'Professor Macmillan Brown's Garden at Cashmere', *CB*, February 1928, p.6

<sup>108</sup> 'Annual Report', *CB*, June 1946, p.6.

<sup>109</sup> 'News of the Society', *CB*, December 1947, p.4.

<sup>110</sup> 'News of the Society', *CB*, September 1948, p.4.

<sup>111</sup> 'News of the Society', *CB*, November 1949, p.4.

<sup>112</sup> 'News of the Society', *CB*, October 1951, p.4

## Native Garden Competitions

The society instituted a native garden prize in 1930, which ran until 1946. This was a special prize awarded as part of the general Home Garden Competitions. For four of those seventeen years no awards were given (1933 and 1943-1945). In eight of the remaining thirteen years the award went to the garden at 26 Banks Avenue, Shirley, initially to A. Keith Hadfield and from 1938 to Mr. P. H. Vickery. The prize went four times to the Smarts, 416 Ashgrove Terrace, Lower Cashmere (1935-1937, 1946) and to Mr. J. Catherwood, 283 Papanui Road, once (1930).<sup>113</sup> Thus, two gardens dominated the competition between 1931 and 1946, neither of which was on the hill.

26 Banks Avenue regularly won first place in the Horticultural Society's garden competitions as the best garden in Christchurch. Called 'Te Wharekoa', this massive (three acre) garden was hardly a 'native garden'. Winifred Chapman described it in rich detail:

Plantations of tree and shrubs occupy, as it were, the wings, whilst gay gardens of summer flowers are disposed about the chaste white marble sundial on the higher levels of the lawn.

The wide graveled driveway curves between trees and flowering shrubs, noticeable amongst them a grand old monkey-puzzle, junipers, copper beeches and spiraeas...

On the slope near the fountain, there are crescent-shaped beds filled with azaleas and rhododendrons, and one may imagine the effect in the springtime when these bushes are a mass of orange and gold... Beds planted with rose trees, pink antirrhinums, and catmint make a brilliant display. The bronze of marigolds lightens the ground beneath the graceful weeping trees which adorn the lawn...<sup>114</sup>

Nevertheless, the native plants were 'an especially attractive and decorative feature of the garden'.

Friendly little fantails dip and flit among the branches as in "the bush" itself. There are several ribbonwoods in bloom; there are olearias and veronicas in variety; senecios, kowhais and many old lancewoods whose tall slender trunks bear tufts of dark spear-like foliage at the top... possibly some of the finest rimu trees (red pine) in cultivation may be found in this lovely garden. One well-grown rimu, with its fragile drooping branchlets of palest green just tinged with brown is worth going far to see, as is also the unexpected beauty of the bracken in the native rock garden.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>113</sup> The information regarding the Smarts is not conclusive; in 1935 the winner was listed as T. W. Smart, in 1936-7 as Mr. A. T. Smart, in 1946 as L. S. Smart. Only the entry for 1937 gives address details. However, allowing for possible misprints and involvement of different family members, it seems reasonable to assume the Ashgrove Tce address was constant. All information regarding the Native Garden award comes from *CB*: February 1930, p.24; March 1931, p.5; March 1932, p.4; February 1933, p.10; April 1934, p.3; April 1935, p.8; April 1936, p.5; April 1937, p.3; March 1938, p.27; February 1939, p.5; April 1940, p.20; March 1941, p.3; March 1942, p.9; March 1943, p.9; February 1944, pp.4-5; March 1945, p.14; March 1946, p.18

<sup>114</sup> Winifred Chapman, "'Te Wharekoa.'" "The House of Gladness", *CB*, March 1930, pp.3-4

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5

A familiar theme with the prize winners in this chapter, therefore, is that their incorporation of 'natural' elements such as alpine and bush zones was counterbalanced by attention to exotic species as well. In Hadfield's case Chinese and Japanese specimens were singled out. Good growing and eclecticism were the main themes. However, a relationship between rock garden and mountain-side, or bush section and bush, was almost an article of faith. Although native plants were part of a non-indigenous garden design, it is true that the wider environment was brought directly into the suburbs, even down to the fantails flitting about.

### Rock Garden Competitions

Despite the quantity of material about rock gardening published in the Society's journal prior to the initiation of a rock garden competition in 1932, the number of entrants in these competitions was always very low. In 1932 there were eleven, in 1933 and 1934 only twelve, the next two years only ten, and in 1937 this number was reduced again to eight. Thereafter, the record is very imprecise, until 1945 when it was revealed that only three rock gardens had been entered.<sup>116</sup>

The locations of these gardens are more illuminating. In 1932, all eleven addresses were included in the results page. They were Crighton Terrace (Cashmere Hill), Huntsbury Spur, Heaton Street (Merivale/ Fendalton), Cambridge Terrace, Konini Street (Riccarton), Puriri Street (Riccarton), Port Hills Road (Cashmere), Cashmere Road (Cashmere), Albert Terrace (St Martins), Valley Road (Cashmere) and Desmond Street (Fendalton). Of these addresses, the winning two, listed first, are clearly hill gardens. Of the rest, those on Port Hills Road, Cashmere Road, Albert Terrace and Valley Road, around the base of the Port Hills, might have been hillside gardens. The remaining five gardens were not hill gardens in any sense. The following year, only the winning two addresses were listed, and were the same as in 1932. In 1934, however, a distinction was made between rock gardens on the hills and those on the flat. It is clear that this distinction was made to ensure 'flat' gardens could compete on an equal footing, because they could compete alongside hill gardens, *and* compete in their own category. The top two in the general category remained the same, but third place went to Mr Andersen in New Brighton, who also won the 'rock gardens on the flat' category. R.

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<sup>116</sup> "'Rock Gardens' Competition', *CB*, November 1932, p.3; 'Home Gardens: Results of Judging at Sumner and Cashmere', *CB*, December 1933, p.24; 'Canterbury Horticultural Society: Annual Report for the Year Ending 31 May 1934', *CB*, June 1934, p.23; 'Annual Report', *CB*, June 1935, p.7; 'C.H.S. Garden Competitions', *CB*, January 1936, p.3; 'Canterbury Horticultural Society: Annual Report for the Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> May 1936', *CB*, February 1936, p.7; 'Canterbury Horticultural Society: Annual Report for the Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> May 1937', *CB*, June 1937, p.6; 'Gardens Competitions', *CB*, February 1946, p.5

Sladen's garden in Puriri Street came second. The next year he won a new category for best-grown rock plants. In 1936, he won a prize for the best-grown alpine. The overall winner in 1935 was again Mrs Fraser on Huntsbury Hill.

In 1936, however, the two top gardens were in Rolleston Street (Linwood), and Andersen's again in New Brighton. In 1937, the winners were Otley in Merivale, Andersen in New Brighton and Sladen in Riccarton. Otley won again in 1938 and 1939; that year, Mrs B. Moore in Julius Terrace, Shirley, came second. She won in 1940. In 1942, the hills came back to the fore: R. Sladen, who had established his mastery of alpine growing in Riccarton, had moved to St Andrew's Hill, and came first in the rock gardens competition that year and in 1943. B. Moore, however, was second in 1942, and Campbell Brown of Wroxton Terrace (Fendalton) was second in 1943. These two were the winners for 1944 and 1945. Third place in 1945 went to Mrs. A. Moore in Avonside Drive (Avonside). Looking only at the top three places (where possible), hillside gardens predominated 1932 to 1935, but thereafter it is rock gardens on the flat that win the most; while Sladen's hill garden won in 1942 to 1943, competition from the flat was strong. The earlier overlap between environmental concerns associated with sloping terrain, interest in native alpine and rock gardening determined that winning rock gardens would be situated on the hills.

Descriptions of winning rock gardens are available, as brief comments from judges, as photographs and, in the case of Mr. Vincent's garden (Figure 21) – which was a winner 1932 to 1934 – in his own articles on the subject. These latter provide the richest detail of one Cashmere rock garden, containing '400 to 500 varieties of alpine plants'. These represented:

many species drawn from mountains from all quarters of the globe. There are plants from the Himalayas, the Swiss Alps, the Balkans, and the Andes. Siberia, Russia, Greece, Italy, and Spain have delivered the treasures of their mountains. Even the lonely Falkland Islands are represented. Japan and China have supplied primulas for the beds at the feet of the rocks. And celmisias and other herbage from the New Zealand Southern Alps flourish among their brethren from overseas, their thick foliage contrasting against the shorter-spiked saxifrages or nestling campanulas and gentians.<sup>117</sup>

This hardly reads as a native rock garden. For Vincent, the key ideas were that a rockery should have 'charm', romantically capturing 'nature in her wild moods... loveliness, maybe, in some boulder-strewn hillside where the ground is carpeted with close-knit verdure' with 'crannies of some weather-beaten rock.' Vincent believed that 'alpine gardening is the antithesis of convention, in which the aim is informality, whether of rock or of general

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<sup>117</sup> Given the accompanying illustration, the writing style and garden description, it is assumed that the author of this article is H. McD. Vincent. 'Alpine and Rock Gardening', *CB*, April 1932, p.27



outline.’<sup>118</sup> He wanted the European species to be better known by local rock gardeners, for example *Veronica teucrium trehane*, whose ‘foliage is bright golden, so that at a distance one is deceived into believing that the gold is that of bloom... [At] flowering time... spikes of sapphire blue appear, giving a contrast almost ethereal against the yellow leaves.’<sup>119</sup>



**Figure 21: H. McD. Vincent’s rock garden, Crichton Terrace, Cashmere**

Source: *CB*, November 1932

(Reprinted courtesy of the Canterbury Horticultural Society)

Despite this, Vincent showed a particular appreciation for native alpine flora. In the final article of his series about his garden, ‘The Growing of New Zealand Alpines in the Rock Garden’, he praised New Zealand native alpines for their ‘charm’, defending them vigorously. One friend, mistaking a particular veronica for Koromiko, was duly berated.

I took my visitor firmly by the scruff of his neck – I am speaking figuratively – and I made him examine that veronica (or “*hebe*” as most experts designate it these days). And I led him to where a sheet of blue rioted over some rocks, the blossoms almost hiding the leaves. “That’s pretty,” he admitted... A convert was made that day; my friend now grows many varieties of veronica, and he doesn’t confuse them with the *Koromiko* variety.

Of *Euphrasia zelandica*, Vincent reported that Cockayne had once told him that ‘it would not flower away from its home’, ‘among the rocks below the Bealey Glacier, Arthur’s Pass’. ‘A novice was able to confound the master; I had flowered it for years at Cashmere. It grew there in the half shade, in a gravelly pocket of the rocks, and a tap that dripped above kept the roots

<sup>118</sup> Vincent, ‘Charm Should Be the Ideal in the Alpine Garden’, *CB*, June 1932, p.9

<sup>119</sup> Vincent, ‘Fancy Can Run Free in the Alpine Garden’, *CB*, August 1932, p.21

moist.’<sup>120</sup> As Cockayne had in 1923, Vincent believed that the ‘*veronicas* (or *hebes*) should be a strong feature of every rock garden... For foliage effect, have several “whip-cords.”’<sup>121</sup> He believed he could discuss native alpiners for hours.

The dual fascination with alpiners from distant countries and a special regard for New Zealand natives is reflected in the judges’ comments for the competition that year:

Each rock garden... should have a character of its own. Standing in the middle of one of the gardens inspected, one might well imagine himself to be in the heart of New Zealand mountain country, with rugged tussocks growing over the rocks in the more exposed places, dainty flowering plants in the sheltered and sun-warmed hollows, and delicate ferns growing in profusion in the lower and more moist sections of the garden. In others the brilliance of flower and foliage gave a strongly tropical touch to the surroundings.<sup>122</sup>

The judges, Barnett included,<sup>123</sup> believed that only true alpiners should appear in rock gardens. They specified that ‘the aim should be to grow as comprehensive a collection representing the various groups of beautiful alpiners from the various alpine regions of the earth, not forgetting our own New Zealand alpine flora, as it is possible to do with the amount of space at one’s disposal.’<sup>124</sup> While the presence of the natives was ‘gratifying’, ‘the importation of exotics will provide the colour that New Zealand plants lack.’<sup>125</sup> Five years later, little had changed. The judges praised Sladen’s garden for the rarities it housed, and for his ‘good collection of New Zealand alpiners’.<sup>126</sup> The report for 1939, however, made no mention of the origin of the plants, and focused entirely on design.<sup>127</sup> Whereas from 1927 to 1935 environmental concerns, the development of hill gardens and an interest in native species pointed to native rock gardens on the hills, after the mid 1930s these component parts seemed to discombobulate. Native and rock gardens could be on the flat; rock gardens did not feature natives, and native gardens featured other species. Hill gardeners lost interest from the mid 1940s. Environmental protection had been an important theme of gardening literature, however, and continued to be asserted thereafter, if much more sporadically.

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<sup>120</sup> Vincent, ‘The Growing of New Zealand Alpiners in the Rock Garden’, *CB*, October 1933, p.19

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p.20

<sup>122</sup> “‘Rock Gardens’ Competition’, *CB*, November 1932, p.4

<sup>123</sup> ‘Home Gardens’, *CB*, December 1933, p.24; ‘Rock Garden and Hill Gardens Competitions’, *CB*, November 1940, p.2

<sup>124</sup> ‘Rock Gardens Competition: Report by the Judges’, *CB*, December 1932, p.15

<sup>125</sup> “‘Rock Gardens’ Competition’, *CB*, November 1932, p.4

<sup>126</sup> ‘C.H.S. Rock Gardens Competition’, *CB*, January 1937, p.12

<sup>127</sup> ‘Garden Competitions’, *CB*, December 1939, p.11

## Conclusion

This discussion of the winners of Horticultural Society hill, native and rock garden competitions points to a paradox within the organisation. Native plants were vigorously promoted 1927 to 1932, but the competition winners in all three categories displayed botanical internationalism as a virtue. There is a strong overlap in this use of native plants with the beautifiers – indeed, as mentioned, the Beautifying Association planted natives in its early years, and the two prize-winning gardens of 1930 pictured in Chapter Three featured native plants. Nevertheless, there was also a strong theme of environmental protection running through this literature, picked up specifically by the Native Birds Protection Society. It is not enough, therefore, to dismiss the inclusion of natives in gardens as simply their absorption into beautiful British forms. They *meant* something more than that: the survival of the pre-European environment and a desire to keep it intact, however minute might have been the actual attempt to do so. In addition to a desire to keep the environment intact, there was also a desire to bring it into domestic space.

It is significant that rock gardens and in most instances ‘bush’ gardens or sections reproduced an idea of a natural environment, and not the real thing. An alpine garden in Riccarton, or on Cashmere for that matter, was not liberating the pre-European character of these areas. Indeed, on the hills, tussock land was transformed into a mixture of rose beds, lawns and rockeries. Nevertheless, the native component paid tribute to indigeneity. It is very difficult to detect in this effort an abiding devotion to a fixed British idea. Native plants may have been domesticated, but the impassioned environmental philosophies attached to them, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s speak very strongly of a different motivation. In effect, a new form of garden emerged, in which the New Zealand environment could speak. In Christchurch, mimetic gardening – in this case the copying of a natural form and reproducing it in the garden – characterises an antipodean form that was an evolution of a British form, seemed to be intensely aware of its immediate environment, but was not exactly a hybrid.

Chapter Three argued that horticultural exhibitions and home garden competitions placed emphasis on suburban beautification from the 1860s. Different awards were available to people in different economic strata, but ‘cottagers’ were always prime targets. The various competitions acted to encourage better gardening. The same was true for competitions that acknowledged native plants. Natives were beautiful, graceful, elegant, delicate and, most importantly, they were charming. However, this does not in itself explain the particular emphasis placed on them by the Horticultural Society. This was to do with the opening of the Otira Tunnel, the visit of Kew’s Director whose particular interest was New Zealand’s

alpines, and the encroachment of suburbia onto hillside areas. The competitions, actually civic rituals, helped incorporate a changing perspective into an established pattern, changing that pattern in the process. They helped mediate that uncomfortable contradiction of 'belonging and not-belonging' Ngaio Marsh felt when she ventured into the mountains.

## 5

# Sustenance

### Introduction

Many garden historians have assumed that vegetable gardening was revived by the emergency of World War Two. In Christchurch, however, this was not the case. Nevertheless, the war did increase the power of a mode of thinking about gardening in the city that had been developing since at least the 1920s: the possibility of the garden to sustain. Gardens were no longer sites of abundance, but they could sustain life, or at least the 'race'. As seen in Chapter Four, concerns about the fragility of the wider environment found reflection in the gardens of Christchurch residents, incorporating the increasingly present Southern Alps into the domestic environment. A parallel development in this period was heightened anxiety over the state of human (Pakeha) well-being, as fears of racial degeneration set in. Eugenic responses, in the same vein as the 'Back to Nature' ethos that took tramping parties on healthy jaunts to the mountains and bush, included promotion of good eating. This involved 'protective' foods, properly grown in home gardens, another way in which the idea of protection found expression in gardens. Advocacy centred on particular crops, particular growing methods and new soil fertility treatments. Linked with this was a belief in the spiritual sustenance afforded by the garden, particularly during the turbulence of World War Two.

### Vegetable Growing

The 'Gardenesque' exhibition held at the State Library of Victoria 2004 to 2005 summarised much of the Australasian historiography on 'Digging for Victory':

The proximity of war in the Pacific gave Australians a new sense of national urgency. Government control over production dictated rationing of goods to ensure that the war effort was accorded the highest priority. Home grown produce not only lessened the demand on rationed goods, but gave householders a greater choice and more certain supply of food. Posters at railway stations gave commuters seasonal planting directions. Complimentary booklets, compiled by Australia's departments of agriculture, disseminated detailed advice on weighty matters such as the staking of tomatoes and destruction of slugs.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 'Gardenesque' Exhibition, SLV, Melbourne, 2004-2005

Similarly, *Green Pens: A Collection of Garden Writing* stated that ‘In World War II vegetables were an urgent requirement for both the troops and the civilian population . . . . In the face of a national threat, all spare hands were to garden for the survival of the nation’.<sup>2</sup> That home vegetable gardening was considered a priority by governments cannot be denied, but it is significant that the experience of gardeners sits outside of these discussions. Literature was certainly generated, but it is difficult to know the extent to which gardeners utilised it.

Andrea Gaynor’s *Harvest of the Suburbs: An Environmental History of Growing Food in Australian Cities*, corrected this picture to a certain extent. Acknowledging that the Australian ‘Grow Your Own’ Campaign ‘doubtless motivated many’, Gaynor suggested that ‘it also encountered resistance, particularly as it failed to take regional variations into account.’<sup>3</sup> A detailed account of wartime gardening experiences was nevertheless lacking from this analysis but, significantly, an important finding regarded the continuities of the period before and during and after the war, when ‘produce continued to be exchanged among family and neighbours, although the satisfactions of this concession to interdependence did not topple the ideal of independence from its dominant position.’<sup>4</sup> Rather than a rupture in gardening experiences, therefore, Gaynor’s work suggested that World War Two did not in fact represent any substantive change. The most important result perhaps was a discursive change in which women’s existing role in home food production was finally legitimated.<sup>5</sup>

Australian historical work on wartime vegetable gardening is still undeveloped, and its main assertions are echoed in New Zealand work on the same subject. In her volumes on *The New Zealand People at War: The Home Front*, Nancy Taylor noted, as did Katie Holmes *et al.* in *Green Pens*<sup>6</sup>, that Dig for Victory copied the British example. In New Zealand, as Taylor explained, the campaign was launched in mid 1943, and followed other government-led attempts to offset the increasing shortage of vegetables, again reflecting the Australian experience. These government initiatives included the Services Vegetable Production Scheme, which created State farms for supplying New Zealand Army camps and Americans stationed throughout the Pacific, the Commercial Gardens Registration Bill, under which commercial growers were contracted to provide for the Services, and ceiling prices on a wide

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<sup>2</sup> Katie Holmes, Susan Martin, Kylie Mirmohamadi (eds), *Green Pens: A Collection of Garden Writing* (Carlton, Victoria, 2004), pp.190-191

<sup>3</sup> Andrea Gaynor, *Harvest of the Suburbs: An Environmental History of Growing Food in Australian Cities* (Crawley, Western Australia, 2006), p.110

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p.115

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.114-115

<sup>6</sup> Holmes, Martin, Mirmohamadi (eds), *Green Pens*, p.188

range of vegetables, even when this seemed to threaten the whole price stabilisation project.<sup>7</sup> Dig for Victory itself involved an impressive array of individuals, as for civilians ‘vegetable growing became a patriotic effort’.<sup>8</sup> Home Guardsmen, their role much diminished by this point, once again had something to do.<sup>9</sup> The *Evening Post* reported record sales of seeds and seedlings.<sup>10</sup> Taylor’s discussion focused on the North Island, particularly Auckland and Wellington. It was in these cities, for example, that allotments for gardeners were created on public land, and in fact Taylor’s quotation from the *Evening Post* concludes with an exhortation to readers to ‘listen to any North Island YA or ZB station . . . for practical instruction.’<sup>11</sup>

Paul Walker, on the other hand, noted Christchurch’s early interest in growing vegetables for the war effort, beginning with a public meeting held in 1939. Women organized to grow food for various institutions from 1940, and he believed their involvement ‘with gardening of all kinds no doubt became more pronounced during the war years’.<sup>12</sup> Thelma Strongman noted that vegetable growing became important during the war, and that a Dig for Victory campaign was launched, ‘and efforts were made to produce garden vegetables throughout the whole year.’<sup>13</sup> In none of these discussions of Dig for Victory is any light shed on actual gardening efforts, except for Taylor’s note about seed and seedling sales, which appears anyway to have referred specifically to Wellington. Further, Christchurch is assumed to have been part of a general government campaign. These sketches give an impression of a unified national effort.

In fact, the home gardening campaigns reflected the debate about land taking place in New Zealand society at the time. In 2004, Otago University’s Centre for the Study of Agriculture, Food and Environment highlighted the extraordinary but largely neglected tension over starkly different agricultural discourses in New Zealand’s history. Noting that agriculture is ‘the historic hub of New Zealand’s socio-economic development and identity’,<sup>14</sup> the authors showed how agricultural development has often attracted highly charged argument. During the 1930s and 1940s, critics of New Zealand’s agricultural direction expressed ‘concerns about food and its origins, the use of land and the soil, and beyond this, some fundamental

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<sup>7</sup> Nancy Taylor, *The New Zealand People at War: The Home Front*, Vol.2 (Wellington, 1986), pp. 782-783

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p.784

<sup>9</sup> Taylor, Vol.1 (Wellington, 1986), p.480

<sup>10</sup> Taylor, Vol.2, p.785

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 784, 785

<sup>12</sup> Paul Walker, ‘Towards the Modern Garden’, in Matthew Bradbury (ed.), *A History of the Garden in New Zealand* (Auckland, 1995), pp. 154, 155

<sup>13</sup> Thelma Strongman, *The Gardens of Canterbury* (Wellington, 1984), p.177

<sup>14</sup> Annie Stuart and Hugh Campbell, *Technology Conflicts in New Zealand Agriculture: Comparing Contemporary and Historical Crises between Publics, Government, Business and Science* (Dunedin, 2004), p.5

criticisms of the developing nature of New Zealand and the future of the nation.’<sup>15</sup> A similar point had been made by Tom Brooking, Robin Hodge and Vaughan Wood, who added that despite the intensity of the debate the critics’ successes were largely limited to suburban areas.<sup>16</sup> However, no significant work on the nature of this contestation over ‘the future of the nation’ as it was played out in the suburbs has thus far been undertaken. Christchurch’s home gardening campaigns of World War Two were part of a wider debate, but their role in it was unique. Controlling the discourse around self-sufficiency was the real battle.

The historiography is therefore suggestive of a rise in home production of vegetables during World War Two. In reality, however, homegrown vegetable production was by no means a phenomenon peculiar to the war, and any rise in such production is dubious. Indeed, various groups with a focus on both personal and environmental health championed home vegetable production, especially from the later 1920s. As seen in Chapter Three, the Garden City concept was posited as the opposite of the slum; urban reform would prevent physical deterioration of the most vulnerable. In addition, however, was the steadily declining fertility rate in New Zealand – apparent since the 1880s<sup>17</sup> – which provoked panic amongst ‘[m]edical moralists, nationalists and imperialists’.<sup>18</sup> One answer, to diminish the infant mortality rate, was promoted by Frederic Truby King, concerned with general ‘racial degeneration’.<sup>19</sup> His promotion of right foods and right eating through the Plunket Society was echoed in a number of fora and was aided by the ‘newer knowledge of nutrition’ regarding the role of vitamins for health.<sup>20</sup> *The New Zealand New Health Journal*, an avowedly eugenicist Christchurch publication targeting women, ran a vegetable and fruit gardening column written by David Combridge in 1927. Although the column did not directly discuss nutrition, its inclusion in a journal about the nutritive values of such foods made the point well enough. Significantly, soil fertility became an important part of this discourse, linking soil health, implicitly at least, with racial virility.<sup>21</sup> Garden hygiene, closely associated with soil health, was regarded with equal importance.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p.27

<sup>16</sup> Tom Brooking, Robin Hodge, Vaughan Wood, ‘The Grasslands Reconsidered’, in Eric Pawson and Tom Brooking (eds), *Environmental Histories of New Zealand* (Melbourne, 2002), p.179

<sup>17</sup> Philippa Mein Smith, *Mothers and King Baby: Infant Survival and Welfare in an Imperial World: Australia 1880-1950* (London, 1997), p.25

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.30

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p.32

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p.220

<sup>21</sup> David Combridge, ‘Gardening Notes’, *The New Zealand New Health Journal*, February 1927, p.5

<sup>22</sup> David Combridge, ‘Gardening Notes’, *The New Zealand New Health Journal*, April-May 1927, p.4



In the midst of the Depression, Christchurch's unemployment committee organised seeds and manure for unemployed men, and a competition that apparently met with enthusiasm.<sup>23</sup> The *Press* reported in July 1934 that 'since August 1933, a depot had been open continuously for the distribution of seeds, plants, manures, and other requirements to relief workers'. 1163 individuals had applied for seed. However, entries in this special competition had dropped markedly, from an impressive 122 in 1933 to 54. Entrants of the Garden Allotments Committee competition were eligible to enter a special category in the Canterbury Horticultural Society's autumn show for six vegetables.<sup>24</sup> Conversely, according to James Watson, non-cultivation could lead to derision.<sup>25</sup> Maurice Staunton, a long term Riccarton resident, recollected this sentiment:

It was the days of the Depression and things were pretty hard, pretty hard indeed. And one chap he said to Dad, 'gosh, you've got some great lettuces. Wish I could afford to buy seed,' he said. Well, at that time he drew out of his pocket a packet of Temple Bar tobacco, and he proceeded to fill his pipe, and Dad said, 'well, with the cost that you've bought that tobacco for,' he said, 'you could have bought all the seed you wanted' he says, 'for the garden', he says. 'It's a case of rolling up your sleeves and getting stuck in,' he says, 'and doing something.'<sup>26</sup>

Chapter Three mentioned that during the Depression beauty took on a new importance in the garden, and in Chapter Four native plants seemingly did, but so too did subsistence. This suggests continuity in gardening practice from the earliest period of colonisation. For many, the vegetable garden remained part of a 'substitute welfare state'.<sup>27</sup>

With the passage of the Social Security Act in 1938, the Government was to provide 'sustenance' – the vernacular term for the new unemployment benefit. By 1940, however, government 'sustenance' was inadequate, as 'Desperate' wrote in a letter to the editor.<sup>28</sup> Again, the garden was seen as one solution. 'The letters from a man on sustenance published recently must sadden many people who are blessed with enough to live on' a correspondent replied. While 'sustenance men' could not afford to live in town, farmers' wives struggled to keep their gardens in order.

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<sup>23</sup> Paul Oakley, 'The Handling of Depression Problems in Christchurch, 1928-35, A Social Study' (M.A., University of Canterbury, 1953), pp.106-107

<sup>24</sup> 'Relief Workers' Garden', *The Press*, 24 July 1934

<sup>25</sup> James Watson, 'Crisis and Change: Economic Crisis and Technological Change Between the World Wars, With Special Reference to Christchurch, 1926-36' (Ph.D, University of Canterbury, 1984), p.562

<sup>26</sup> Maurice Staunton, interviewed 29 August 2005

<sup>27</sup> Miles Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and Its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society, 1850-1900* (Auckland, 1989), p.100

<sup>28</sup> 'Desperate', 'Living on Sustenance', *The Press*, 24 April 1940

I suggest that the Government should put Public Works Department huts at the disposal of sustenance men in the country. Arrangements could easily be made so that the man did some light work, probably in the garden for a farmer's wife, and in return for which he would receive say, a quart of milk a day, and a dozen or so eggs a week, and probably vegetables till he could establish his own garden.<sup>29</sup>

Such practical concerns were different from, though rhetorically complementary to the ideals of the nutritionists.

The earlier connection between healthy food and racial hygiene continued through the 1930s, promoted by such groups as the Sunlight League, a Christchurch-based, eugenist women's organisation.<sup>30</sup> In a parcel of specially grown vegetables sent to soldiers in 1941, the following poem exhorted them to stay clean:

We wish you well.  
We wish you strong against temptations of the flesh -  
In far-off cities, disease contaminated  
Bring back no hurt for unborn children's [*sic*] lives.  
Come back clean, fathers of our unspoilt race.<sup>31</sup>

The food in the parcel had been grown by League members who, from 1941, had organised themselves into a gardening group. As well as supplying food to local women whose husbands were away, and to children's health camps,<sup>32</sup> filling a vacuum left by 'men who cultivated their gardens [who] were away fighting',<sup>33</sup> these women were keeping their fighting sons vigorous and resistant to disease as well as to temptations of the flesh. Again, a surprising amount of attention was given to soil fertility, initially improved with bonedust and superphosphate, but by 1944 with trenched cow manure and wood ash and by 1945 with the making of compost heaps.<sup>34</sup>

Similarly, the New Zealand Women's Food Value League incorporated their concerns about the alleged decline in home vegetable production, poor food preparation in the home, poor nutrition, the high price of vegetables and lack of knowledge about soil fertility in its general lobbying work. Its first *Bulletin*, published in December 1937, said its conception was 'due

<sup>29</sup> Kay, 'Men on Sustenance', *The Press*, 9 December 1940

<sup>30</sup> See for example, Susan Wilson, 'The Aims and Ideology of Cora Wilding and the Sunlight League 1930-1936' (Extended M.A. Essay, University of Canterbury, 1980), pp.31-32; Nadia Gush, 'Beauty of Health: Cora Wilding and the Sunlight League' (M.A., University of Canterbury, 2003)

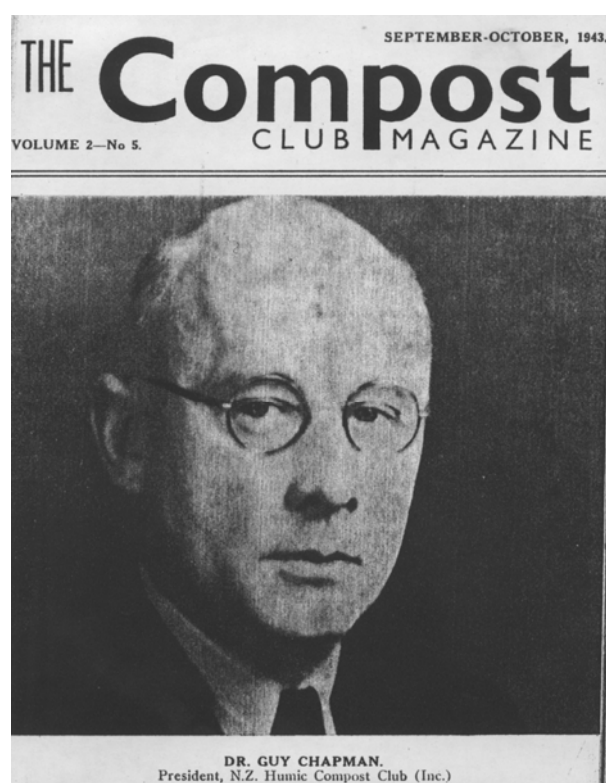
<sup>31</sup> Edith Howes, 'To Our Soldiers', in Sunlight League Gardening Group Minutes, 7 June 1941, Cora Wilding Papers, MB 183-1.4, *MB*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 June 1941

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 July 1941

<sup>34</sup> 20 September 1941, *Ibid.*; January 1944, *Ibid.*; July 1945, *Ibid.*

entirely to the vision of Dr Guy Chapman, who has long advocated a “Bureau of Foods”.<sup>35</sup> Chapman was a dentist whose interest in nutrition began in 1920, and had founded the New Zealand Food Reform Society in 1922.<sup>36</sup> He had written articles on nutrition, and especially about salad-making, for the Christchurch publication, *Democracy*.<sup>37</sup> He was also the founder of the New Zealand Humic Compost Club, taking the eugenist interest in soil fertility to new levels (Figure 22). These organisations were motivated by a radical agenda. They imagined a new form of society, centred on healthy soil, ‘a new social order . . . firmly rooted in reality’, as the League put it in ‘Social Revolution and the Garden’.<sup>38</sup>



**Figure 22: Guy Chapman on cover of *The Compost Club Magazine*, 1943**  
**Source: Soil & Health Association of New Zealand Archive, Head Office, Auckland**

Taking their case to the City Council’s Vegetable Committee in early July 1942, the Christchurch branch of the League pleaded ‘the case of the vegetable . . . to show you just why it is a work of national and civic importance to maintain supplies, no matter what the cost or difficulties of money or effort.’ They argued that ‘vegetables occupy a position of the greatest protective value.’ As a result of not eating enough properly prepared vegetables, New Zealanders suffered from tuberculosis, influenza, eye complaints, catarrh, and ‘Faulty nerve conditions’, which included ‘Neuritis, sterility (falling birth rate), inability for mothers to give

<sup>35</sup> *Bulletin of the N.Z. Women’s Food Value League*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1937, p.1, ATL

<sup>36</sup> Guy Chapman, ‘Soil and Nutrition’, *Compost Magazine*, Vol.7, No.6, 1948, p.16

<sup>37</sup> These were reprinted as ‘Health Grows Naturally’ (Auckland, 1943), CCL

<sup>38</sup> C. L. Gillies, ‘Social Revolution and the Garden’, *Bulletin of the N.Z. Women’s Food Value League*, Vol.6, No.1, 1942, pp.3-4, ATL

babies natural feeding, digestive troubles, [and] duodenal ulcers . . . ’ ‘How can we overcome these deficiencies [?]’ they asked.

We don’t want all these diseases, we want men and women with healthy nerves, normal digestive functions, strong resistant lungs, healthy blood which clots well and heals wounds quickly, healthy bones and teeth and firm muscles, women who can nurture their babies successfully; men and women who will reproduce readily a revitalised race; men and women fit to take their places in the new world order we are at present fighting to achieve.

Finally, after a number of suggestions about how to grow and prepare vegetables better, they asked the Vegetable Committee ‘Why not a Civic Vegetable Campaign [?]’<sup>39</sup>

This Vegetable Committee had been established by the Christchurch City Council on 11 May 1942 ‘to consider ways and means of securing a regular supply of fresh vegetables to citizens, at reasonable prices...’ The committee was made up of a number of Councillors, with representatives from the Women’s Branch of the Labour Party, Women’s Branch of the Citizens’ Association, National Council of Women, Canterbury Housewives’ Union, New Zealand Women’s Food Value League, Christchurch Central Towns Women’s Guild, the Home Economics Association and the West of England Society.<sup>40</sup> It heard evidence from producers, brokers and auctioneers, retailers and consumers (i.e. women) and concluded that indeed there was a fluctuating supply, the contributing factors of which were ‘climatic conditions; man-power, army requirements, possible seed shortages, apparent lack of planning and the need for more enlightenment in the proper use and preparation of vegetables, and especially the avoidance of waste.’ Most importantly, the evidence showed that there was no real shortage of vegetables, but due to ‘a shortage of man-power and petrol, and a glut in prices at the market’, the producer in many cases preferred to plough produce in rather than take it to market. The prices asked by producers appeared reasonable, and although the retailers seemed to be charging considerably more, ‘taking into account the wastage, variation in prices and general overhead expenses to the retailer’, their prices were not considered excessive either. Nevertheless, the evidence of the women present ‘showed that persons on the basic wage could not purchase sufficient vegetables at present retail prices.’<sup>41</sup>

The War itself was not the prime factor involved in this perceived problem of short supply. About lack of man power, it was noted that the problem had arisen with the general drift of

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<sup>39</sup> Vegetable Committee Minutes, 1 July 1942, Special Committee Minute Book No.8, CH 380/c/124, 1746, *ANZCRO*

<sup>40</sup> Vegetable Committee’s Report, 27 July 1942, Christchurch City Council Minute Book No.1, CH 380/73, 22882, *ANZCRO*

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., Christchurch City Council Minute Book No.1, CH 380/73, 22883, *ANZCRO*

workers to urban areas, a situation which had been aggravated, but not caused by the war. Concerning Army requirements, 'the evidence tended to show that the requirements of the Army had not necessarily caused a shortage of vegetables,' although the Committee acknowledged that some sort of planning should be implemented to avoid possible problems in the future. The war had caused seed shortages, where the seeds of some vegetables 'particularly leeks and cauliflowers – have come from countries now occupied by the enemy.'<sup>42</sup> Other factors caused by the war included an insufficient allowance of petrol, the disappearance of the hawker, and that 'Chinese gardeners [had reduced production] as they are now unable to remit money overseas'.<sup>43</sup> Equally important, however, seemed to be problems inherent in the Social Security system, which were thought 'to restrict the activities of beneficiaries who might otherwise be full-time producers', and the use of a large amount of carrots in the previous season for the purpose of poisoning rabbits.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, the Canterbury Association of Commercial Gardeners blamed, amongst other things, 'increased leisure time' and 'increased wages' which had 'turned the attention of the average householder from kitchen-gardening to other less strenuous forms of exercise, or to the cultivation of flower gardens', so the demand for vegetables was greater.<sup>45</sup> The Christchurch Fruit and Produce Brokers' Association maintained that prices were always high at that time of the year, and that prices for cabbages and cauliflowers had been 'extremely cheap for some months now'. The war was not even mentioned as a factor.<sup>46</sup> The argument of the Women's Food Value League that more vegetables needed to be eaten for nutritive purposes, while it seemed to sit outside of immediate economic concerns and predated the war, was actually a key factor in the Vegetable Committee's recommendation that the City establish a Civic Vegetable Campaign. Indeed, once the City Council had endorsed the campaign, on 27 July 1942, its aims reflected no wartime emergency either. Rather, they were:

1. To encourage the national use of vegetables as protective foods in prevention of disease.
2. Mineral requirement of soil for proper production of nutritive vegetables.
3. Right kind of vegetables to eat for health. Classification of vegetables.
4. Correct preparation and use of these vegetables.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., Christchurch City Council Minute Book No.1, CH 380/73, 22883, *ANZCRO*

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., Christchurch City Council Minute Book No.1, CH 380/73, 22884, *ANZCRO*

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., Christchurch City Council Minute Book No.1, CH 380/73, 22884, *ANZCRO*

<sup>45</sup> Canterbury Association of Commercial Gardeners Incorporated to Town Clerk, 9 June 1942, CH 342, Box 72, *ANZCRO*

<sup>46</sup> Christchurch Fruit & Produce Brokers' Association to Town Clerk, 9 June 1942, CH 342, Box, 72, *ANZCRO*

<sup>47</sup> 'His Worship the Mayor's Statement', 28 September 1942, Christchurch City Council Minute Book No.1, CH 380/73, 22968, *ANZCRO*

Long-standing concerns about health justified the vegetable campaign in Christchurch, not war-time emergency.

The Civic Vegetable Campaign was highly publicised, involved the creation of model plots and the ritual of a garden competition. The three sub-committees established (Growing of Vegetables, Nutritional and General, and Publicity) met frequently to ensure the campaign had high visibility for maximum impact. Their campaign contained a number of elements: special radio talks and advertisements, newspaper contributions,<sup>48</sup> a pamphlet,<sup>49</sup> a highly publicised show,<sup>50</sup> demonstration events, luncheon talks at a variety of organisations<sup>51</sup> and of course a garden competition.<sup>52</sup> Other suggestions included the production of 10000 handbills,<sup>53</sup> and the employment of sandwich-boys 'to advertise the campaign on Saturday mornings or Friday nights – 12 boys to go in procession round the Square and then branch off separately to parade different blocks'. Slides, 'showing relative food values of vegetables' were to be prepared for screening in motion picture theatres.<sup>54</sup>

Gardeners were to be given information on how to garden, and their use of this information was to be tested. Morris Barnett, Superintendent of Parks and Reserves, noted in June 1943 that the Canterbury Horticultural Society had been publishing articles to assist home gardeners in the cultivation of unseasonable vegetables. Barnett was to collate this information into brochure form. Further, he suggested the development of demonstration gardens in the various suburban parks, as well as in the Botanic Gardens.<sup>55</sup> These avenues of information dissemination would supplement the radio talks, to be given 'right through the year by garden experts', which would give 'advice as to methods of soil cultivation, types of soil, methods of planting, types of vegetables and their suitability for different kinds of soil etc'. Importantly, this 'information supplied by the radio talks' was 'to be utilised by

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<sup>48</sup> Vegetable Committee Minutes, 23 February 1943 Special Committee Minute Book No.8, CH 380/c/124, 1842, *ANZCRO*

<sup>49</sup> Nutritional Value and General Committee, Civic Vegetable Campaign Minutes, 3 February 1943 Special Committee Minute Book No.8, CH 380/c/124, 1829, *ANZCRO*

<sup>50</sup> Nutritional Value and General Committee, Civic Vegetable Campaign Minutes, 2 March 1943, Special Committee Minute Book No.8, CH 380/c/124, 1845, *ANZCRO*

<sup>51</sup> Publicity Committee Minutes, 11 February 1943, Special Committee Minute Book No.8, CH 380/c/124, 1834, *ANZCRO*

<sup>52</sup> Nutritional Value and General Committee, Civic Vegetable Campaign Minutes, 2 March 1943, Special Committee Minute Book No.8, CH 380/c/124, 1845, *ANZCRO*

<sup>53</sup> Nutritional Value and General Committee, Civic Vegetable Campaign Minutes, 16 March 1943 Special Committee Minute Book No.8, CH 380/c/124, 1853, *ANZCRO*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 1854, *ANZCRO*

<sup>55</sup> Vegetable Committee, 15 June 1943 Special Committee Minute Book No.8, CH 380/c/124, 1885, *ANZCRO*

gardeners entering their gardens for the competition.’<sup>56</sup> The garden competition was to be the test of whether citizens had put to use the information that had been given to them by the City Council and organisations such as the Canterbury Horticultural Society.

It was not until mid 1943 that Wellington informed the Christchurch City Council, confidentially, of its planned Dig for Victory campaign.<sup>57</sup> At this stage it was still uncertain whether Dig for Victory was definitely to proceed. However, A. R. Grainger, Orchard Instructor for the Department of Agriculture and the Dig for Victory organiser for Canterbury, felt the Government’s aims were so similar to the Council’s that the Council’s support would be ‘essential . . . if this matter is to be carried out successfully’.<sup>58</sup> A letter addressed to the Town Clerk, Christchurch City Council, from Wellington, dated 2 July 1943, shows that the Council had advised the Government of its Civic Vegetable Campaign following Grainger’s correspondence. Given the amount of work already put into the Christchurch campaign, which had been established just over eleven months earlier, the tone of the letter is interesting. It congratulated the Council on its campaign, which was ‘on the lines of the “Dig for Victory” Campaign’. It seemed ‘to meet all requirements and should work out entirely satisfactorily.’ The Government would be ‘very glad to furnish you at any time with all the literature we can,’ and enclosed a copy of a report ‘describing the lines adopted here for the introduction and carrying out of the “Dig for Victory” Scheme.’<sup>59</sup> The Government might also give some financial assistance to the Christchurch campaign, but it did not seem especially interested in getting involved beyond this. The Government did not extend its Dig for Victory programme into the South Island until September 1944.<sup>60</sup>

At the meeting establishing the Canterbury Victory Garden Council held in September 1944 Grainger explained that until now Dig for Victory had been focussed on the North Island. When challenged by Barnett about ‘why the effort was being made at this late hour and not before’, Grainger’s response was to provide ‘technical reasons why South Island produce could not be handled for export with the desired speed necessary to ensure that all vegetables exported would be in perfect condition on arrival at their destination.’ G. Stratford, of the Department of Agriculture, Dunedin, bluntly stated ‘the North Island’s greater need.’ In giving any actual justification for widening the scope of the campaign to Canterbury,

<sup>56</sup> Nutritional Value and General Committee Minutes, 2 March 1943, Special Committee Minute Book No.8, CH 380/c/124, 1842, *ANZCRO*

<sup>57</sup> A. R. Grainger to Christchurch City Council Town Clerk, 11 June 1943, CH 342, Box 72, *ANZCRO*

<sup>58</sup> Vegetable Committee, 15 June 1943, Special Committee Minute Book No.8, CH 380/c/124, 1885, *ANZCRO*

<sup>59</sup> J. W. Gibbons (Defence Services) to Town Clerk, Christchurch City Council, 2 July 1943, Special Committee Minute Book No.8, CH 380/c/124, 1898, *ANZCRO*

<sup>60</sup> Minutes of Inaugural Meeting of Representatives to set up Canterbury Victory Garden Council, 14 September 1944, Special Committee Minute Book No.8, p.1, CH 380/c/124b, 2006, *ANZCRO*

Grainger said merely that ‘the Minister now realised the need to provide the home gardener with a better service.’<sup>61</sup> No other reasons were offered, nor did they seem to be required. Barnett put the motion forward, later carried unanimously, that:

this meeting set up a voluntary Victory Garden Council with the aim of putting into effect in the Canterbury District the objects of the National Executive in Wellington, namely, to promote an increase in the number of home gardens, to make, as far as it is practicable, each home self-supporting in its requirements of fresh vegetables and to provide home gardeners with sound practical advice in the art of planned vegetable production – in short to inculcate “Dig for Victory” ideals in our people.<sup>62</sup>

The aim of the meeting was to create a new entity to supersede the Civic Vegetable Campaign, now more than two years old. Notably, none of the women’s organisations that had been so prominent at the beginning of that campaign were represented at this meeting. More pointedly, Barnett explicitly stated that ‘he moved the motion on the understanding that the Victory Garden Council would concentrate on the job at hand *and would not go into the nutrition side of the business*, i.e. that the Council would concentrate on the production aspect [emphasis added].’<sup>63</sup> Instead of meeting the needs of women concerned about the health of the populace, the campaign was conducted to instil generalised Dig for Victory ideals, which meant ideals related to the defence of the home front in time of national, wartime, emergency.

These were soon expressed in public advertisements: ‘For your own and your Country’s sake, keep on sowing and growing vegetables for all seasons.’ Health might still be a factor. ‘A well-planned garden returns you big benefits in family health, [and] helps the family budget’ – but more importantly it would also release ‘more vegetables from Commercial Growers to feed the fighting men abroad’.<sup>64</sup> The Executive Committee of the new Victory Garden Council was comprised of seven men, Barnett, James McPherson (Christchurch Domains Board, responsible for the Botanic Gardens), S. A. LaRoche (Chief Agricultural Inspector to the Canterbury Education Board), C. Grant (North Canterbury Hospital Board), Edgar Taylor (son of Ambrose Taylor, member of the Relief Gardens Committee during the Depression, Canterbury Horticultural Society and Head Gardener of St Andrew’s College<sup>65</sup>) J. R. Templin (Canterbury Horticultural Society) and L. L. A. Hennessy (Addington Workshops Horticultural Society). Two of these, Templin and Hennessy, had been winners of the Canterbury Horticultural Society’s garden competitions. In addition, Combridge, Lennie and

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p.1

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p.1

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p.2

<sup>64</sup> Advertisement, CSS, 31 March 1945

<sup>65</sup> CB, April 1943, p.17



Grainger became convenors of sub-committees, which also included W. T. Wainman and B. Sprange of the new Canterbury Branch of the New Zealand Humic Compost Club.<sup>66</sup>

Templin suggested, in September 1944, that 'a competition be held for the best Victory Garden', and was supported in this by Lennie, who said that such a competition had been very successful in the past.<sup>67</sup> The National Executive, however, declined to lend financial support to the proposal, and local firms were approached.<sup>68</sup> The seedsmen, perhaps unsurprisingly, seemed particularly forthcoming. Otherwise, progress with the competition was slow. Radio programmes seemed not to be giving the campaign any airtime.<sup>69</sup> Despite the advertising on trams and in other locations, Lennie reported in mid October that:

the response had been disappointing. He stated that there had not been any enquiries re the Garden Competition and there seemed to be some need for more publicity, particularly over the air and in the press. Unless the Council could make a better showing in the papers he felt that the efforts of the Council would be useless.<sup>70</sup>

Two proposals to counter the lack of public interest were put forward. The first, from Grainger and Lennie, was 'that an advertisement including requests for entries be inserted in the daily papers.' Templin expanded on this by saying 'that the most vigorous campaign should be conducted during December and January'. Moreover, he believed that lunchtime talks given to workers in Woolston, mooted at a previous meeting, would be a good way of making more direct contact with the public. The Woolston Horticultural Society was to take this work on.<sup>71</sup>

Work on the Victory Garden Competition continued, and in early November 1944 the committee dealing with it created a map of the metropolitan area 'showing 10 different districts delineated according to soil condition',<sup>72</sup> an explicit recognition of the effects varying soil types had on horticultural potentials. Towards the middle of November public

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<sup>66</sup> Minutes of Inaugural Meeting of Representatives to set up Canterbury Victory Garden Council, 14 September 1944, Special Committee Minute Book No.8, p.2, CH 380/c/124b, 2006, *ANZCRO*. Lennie, incidentally, was the Chairperson of the Compost Club's Canterbury branch. Both Barnett and McPherson became vice-chairs of this organisation at this time.

<sup>67</sup> Canterbury Victory Garden Council Minutes, 21 September 1944, Ag 93/3/29, *ANZCRO*. Please note that since the early 1980s, when the Department of Agriculture duplicates used in this thesis were copied from Archives New Zealand, the classification system has changed. The new on-line cataloguing system, 'Archway', is still incomplete and the documents in question are currently untracable. Staff at both the Christchurch and Wellington offices have searched for these documents unsuccessfully. The copies used here are the property of Professor John Cookson.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 October 1944, Ag 93/3/29, *ANZCRO*

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 November 1944, Ag 93/3/29, *ANZCRO*

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 October 1944, Ag 93/3/29, *ANZCRO*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 October 1944, Ag 93/3/29, *ANZCRO*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 November 1944, Ag 93/3/29, *ANZCRO*

interest in the competition picked up. This was attributed to advertisements for it being played on 3ZB, and to the map's placement, along with 'appropriate placards' at the Patriotic Fair held in the King Edward Barracks.<sup>73</sup> The need to keep gardeners interested in their vegetables continued to receive attention into December: 'Considerable discussion took place on the need for timely publicity being given the Competition to keep gardeners interested in their vegetables after Christmas.' Lennie and Combridge were particularly interested in setting an actual date for the closure of entries, as 'if the judging was left till a late date many people would be digging into their gardens and might not want the judges to be visiting their properties when they were not at their best.' It was decided that entries should close at the end of January, and that judging should take place at the end of March.<sup>74</sup> Overall, the impression gleaned from the minutes of these meetings is that the Victory Garden Council wanted to inculcate certain Dig for Victory 'ideals' – which it listed at public events such as the Canterbury Horticultural Society Rose Show,<sup>75</sup> and which were delivered to factory workers during lunchtime lectures – but was faced with a disappointing lack of interest from the general public. More lectures, bigger newspaper advertisements, more frequent radio slots and more posters were considered the best way to drive home the point that growing vegetables was important and so was the garden competition.

The entry form for the competition emphasised the patriotic nature of the work at hand:

The spirit of this Competition is to encourage the householder to devote some of his leisure time to the cultivation of vegetables sufficient to supply the needs of his family throughout the year insofar as it is possible to do, and thus to assist in the great cause for victory by permitting more vegetables grown by the commercial grower to be despatched to the Armed Forces both in New Zealand and Overseas.<sup>76</sup>

Points were to be awarded for quality and perfection of crops, succession of crops, variety of crops, and general cultivation, neatness, maintenance and freedom from disease. Of especial interest were vegetables that could be stored for winter use, such as runner beans, pumpkins and onions.<sup>77</sup>

As far as the two major newspapers were concerned, the Victory Garden Competition of late March 1945 appears not to have warranted reporting. No references to it in either the *Press* or the *Christchurch Star-Sun* were made. It attracted fifty entries. The overall winner was Mr. J.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 16 November 1944, Ag 93/3/29, ANZCRO

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 14 December 1944, Ag 93/3/29, ANZCRO

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 14 December 1944, Ag 93/3/29, ANZCRO

<sup>76</sup> 'Dig For Victory Garden Competition' entry form, insert in *CB*, February 28, 1945

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

C. Macintosh, 691 Worcester Street, Linwood:<sup>78</sup> a horticultural unknown in what was by the 1940s a comparatively insalubrious area. Indeed, given the skill involved in producing outstanding vegetables, it seems likely that Macintosh would normally have grown a ‘good’ vegetable garden but would never have normally qualified for the Canterbury Horticultural Society’s competitions, which emphasised aesthetics over provisioning. The competition therefore acted to turn an ordinary activity into something extraordinary: self-provisioning was positioned as an abnormal activity undertaken only in an emergency and for the greater good.

It is useful to compare this briefly with the American experience, which despite similar conditions, was quite different from that of Christchurch. *House & Garden*, a popular gardening magazine, which supplied the United States Government with its Victory Gardening emblem, gives a good indication of the phases of the U.S. campaign. *House & Garden*’s focus was often on morale. In January 1942 *House & Garden* produced a special ‘Defense Garden’ issue. It argued against ‘hysterical’ vegetable sowing, as had happened during World War One and tended to waste seed. Instead, judicious, careful sowing was encouraged and there was a plea, too, not to ‘abandon growing and flowering beauty. For besides the hunger of the body there is a “hidden hunger”. The body may adjust itself to short rations but morale can never be sustained unless the “hidden hunger” lurking in all of us is satisfied.’ Defence gardens were to be made to reduce the need for vegetable transportation, to enable allies to be fed, to improve national health, and mitigate the effects of soil erosion. ‘Perhaps in the end what we defend most in defense gardens is our dream for a better world.’<sup>79</sup> Maintaining beauty in the garden was a frequent concern: ‘Order is the vegetable garden’s first law, but grouping and edging also add beauty to defense’.<sup>80</sup> By the time the Government’s Victory Garden programme was under way, by March 1942, *House & Garden* was expressing concern that this need for beauty might be lost: ‘... the Department of Agriculture might seem to have neglected the value of morale maintenance found in flower gardening’;<sup>81</sup> ‘... do not neglect the flower garden. Keep that going... Well-balanced gardening will help make you well balanced.’<sup>82</sup> Alongside the need to keep flowers in the home garden, the magazine wanted public parks kept in good order, and not dug up to grow vegetables.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>78</sup> ‘Dig for Victory Gardens’, *CB*, April 1945, p.13

<sup>79</sup> Richardson Wright, ‘What Does a Defense Garden Defend?’, *HG*, January 1942, p.10, *DO*

<sup>80</sup> *HG*, January 1942, p.29, *DO*

<sup>81</sup> ‘The Bulletin Board’, *HG*, March 1942, p.15, *DO*

<sup>82</sup> ‘Gardens for Victory’, *HG*, March 1942, p.45, *DO*

<sup>83</sup> ‘Victory Garden Program’, *HG*, March 1942, p.65, *DO*

It was not the American example that was publicised in Christchurch's *City Beautiful*, but rather the Soviet example. In fact, in marked contrast to *House & Garden*'s call for moderation in vegetable production, and the maintenance of public spaces for aesthetic reasons, the massive Soviet Victory Gardening programme was invoked as an example. Remarking that in 1943 11.5 million Soviet citizens grew Victory Gardens on almost 1900000 acres, the programme's success was said to be 'due to the activities of a special Victory Garden Aid Committee set up by the Central Council of Soviet Trade Unions.' In Leningrad people had 'dug for victory even under the stress of the blockade. Every spare bit of land in the streets and squares of the city was utilised to augment the restricted food supplies.'<sup>84</sup> A similar story replete with enormous figures for workers, acreages and harvest tonnages from the Soviet Victory Garden programme was published in April 1945.<sup>85</sup> The Canterbury Horticultural Society's committee received, in late 1944, a request from the New Zealand Society for Closer Relations with Russia 'for assistance in supplying vegetable seeds for transmission to Russia', and the details of the request were published in *The City Beautiful*.<sup>86</sup> The extraordinary example of the Soviet campaign heightened the sense that the Christchurch effort was extraordinary, that is, *unusual* in the same sense that Mr Macintosh's winning Victory Garden was unusual. The massive effort demanded by the Victory Garden Council seemed certain to ensure that householders would consider self-provisioning a desperate measure required during wartime, and not a normal part of the domestic routine.

This discussion of vegetable production suggests that rather than an increase of home vegetable growing during the war, there was a discursive change regarding the promotion of such growing. Since the 1920s the nutritive values of vegetables had been promoted as one way to rescue the perceived waning vitality of Pakeha New Zealand. Ironically, however, the war finally offered the opportunity to show how home food production should be regarded as an extraordinary measure, for the duration. This does not necessarily relate to actual gardening practice, and this question is considered in greater detail in the following chapters.

### Soil Fertility

The improvement of soil fertility was linked to vegetable production as a means of revitalising the race. A closer examination of this shows a shift in prescribed gardening practice which required a transformation in popular beliefs about hygiene. The war facilitated the introduction of the scientific compost heap (also known as the Indore compost heap). The

<sup>84</sup> 'Soviet Victory Diggers', *CB*, 31 August 1944, pp.10-11

<sup>85</sup> 'Victory Gardens in the U.S.S.R.', *CB*, 30 April 1945, p.15

<sup>86</sup> 'Vegetable Seeds for Russia', *CB*, 31 October, 1944, p.4

composting movement has been examined in Britain,<sup>87</sup> and Annie Stuart and Hugh Campbell have recently explored aspects of the compost movement's development in New Zealand, although this is not strictly related to home gardening.<sup>88</sup> 'Hot compost' was devised by Sir Albert Howard between 1925 and 1930 at Indore, India,<sup>89</sup> and promoted in New Zealand by the Compost Club, from its origin in 1941. It was the first such organisation in the world, and Howard was its patron.<sup>90</sup> Jack Meechin's history of the New Zealand Humic Compost Club, an in-house publication, included some useful biographical information, but did not provide much in the way of explanation for the Club's appearance in 1941 nor the process by which it became firmly established.<sup>91</sup> Claire Williams' 1985 extended essay likened the Club to a millenarian organisation, although she stated that she did not believe the Club to have actually been one.<sup>92</sup>

J. T. Sinclair, *Press* gardening columnist 1917 to 1934, gardener of A. E. G. Rhodes and judge of home garden competitions,<sup>93</sup> treated feeding the soil with organic matter as a matter of urgency for the first time in 1920. This was an immediate consequence of World War

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<sup>87</sup> David Matless, 'Bodies Made of Grass Made of Earth Made of Bodies: Organicism, Diet and National Health in Mid-Twentieth-Century England', *Journal of Historical Geography*, Vol.27, No.3, 2001, pp.355-376; Gregory Barton, 'Sir Albert Howard and the Forestry Roots of the Organic Farming Movement', *Agricultural History*, Vol.75, No.2, 2001, pp.168-187; Philip Conford, 'The Myth of Neglect: Responses to the Early Organic Movement, 1930-1950', *Agricultural History Review*, Vol.50, No.1, 2002, pp.89-102

<sup>88</sup> Stuart and Campbell. See also Brooking, Hodge and Wood, in Pawson and Brooking (eds), p.179

<sup>89</sup> Howard had assembled existing research on 'the utilization of crude organic matter' during his time in India as Director of the Institute of Plant Industry at Indore, and Agricultural Adviser to the States in Central India and Rajputana. In doing so, he perfected his technique of compost making. He claimed, in a 1938 article, that 'In the course of its working out, the Indore process has been founded on correct biochemical principles, and is not far removed from Chinese or other more primitive practices evolved empirically in other parts of the world.' While it might not have been far removed, it was, so he claimed, far more scientific and precise. See Albert Howard, 'The Manufacture of Humus by the Indore Process', *Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, 1938, quoted in Eve Balfour, *The Living Soil and the Haughley Experiment* (London, 1975), pp.64-65

<sup>90</sup> A Soil and Health Association along the same principles was established in Britain shortly after. Whether the British Association gained inspiration from the New Zealand Club is a moot point; Sir Albert Howard himself was definitely influenced by New Zealand developments, as he was by developments across the world. In one letter of 1947, shortly before his death, Howard's wife wrote to Dove Meyer Robinson and made a point of mentioning that in their London garden, 'Sir Albert makes all the compost, in two 'New Zealand boxes', a reference to a New Plymouth innovation. Lady Louise Howard to Dove Meyer Robinson, 2 June 1947, DMR Papers, Box 8, 100.75 (d), *ACL*. Perhaps more interestingly, in a slightly later correspondence, Lady Howard noted that in London, 'a Compost Club has just been formed. It looks as though this movement for local clubs might spread in the home country also, which would then be following in the footsteps of New Zealand. We rather hope so, as we believe very much in local effort. Great Britain has such a vast population that unless one decentralizes one is lost.' Lady Louise Howard to Dove Meyer Robinson, 19 July 1947, DMR Papers, Box 8, 100.75 (d), *ACL*.

<sup>91</sup> Jack Meechin, *A History of the First 50 Years of the Soil & Health Association of N.Z. – 1942-1992* (Auckland, 1993).

<sup>92</sup> Claire Williams, *The New Zealand Humic Compost Society: More than a garden club* (Research essay, University of Canterbury, 1985).

<sup>93</sup> See 'Cottage Garden Competition: Judging Day', *The Press*, 7 January 1918

One's disruption of potassic fertiliser supplies. He suggested vegetable ash as a replacement potassic fertiliser.<sup>94</sup> However, trenching got equal attention. 'At the risk of labouring the point, the writer would again urge returning to the ground every morsel of material of every sort for the sake of its utility as a direct or indirect fertilising agent,' he said. 'Not only should garden refuse be treated in this way, but any spare material from the house (including, of course, rags and bones), should be used as well.'<sup>95</sup> Sinclair taught the application of ash from garden waste, green manuring with crops 'such as turnips, rape, and mustard', and the use of stable manures and superphosphates where available as important aspects of soil fertility maintenance. The latter was quick acting, 'and should not be applied until spring'.<sup>96</sup> Double-digging and trenching were equally promoted. By the end of 1920 Sinclair remarked that '[o]wing to the scarcity of stable manure, green manuring will have to be done more in the future than it has been in the past.'<sup>97</sup> Nevertheless, he was still promoting the same mix of fertility improvers at the end of his tenure as columnist. Superphosphate, liquid animal manures, horse manure for heavy soil, cow manure for light soil, and the digging in of 'plenty of decayed vegetable refuse in the autumn' and artificial manures in the spring were all advocated.<sup>98</sup> Jack Humm (columnist 1934 to 1945) gave similar advice. 'In vegetable gardens', he wrote, 'where the soil is heavily cropped year after year it is necessary to use animal manure or dig in some green manure crop, such as Cape barley, blue lupin, or decayed leaves to supplement the soil with humus.'<sup>99</sup> Green manuring and the use of stable manure was frequently advocated 'to increase humus', while mixtures of superphosphate, nitrate of potash and sulphate of ammonia would introduce plant food to the soil. Deep digging and trenching were suggested; for strawberries 'hortnap' should be dusted 'freely in the bottom of the trench [to] destroy fungus and insect pests'.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>94</sup> J.T. Sinclair, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, June 16, 1920

<sup>95</sup> Sinclair, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 30 June 1920

<sup>96</sup> Sinclair, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 16 June 1920

<sup>97</sup> Sinclair, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 21 December 1920

<sup>98</sup> Sinclair, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 9 January 1934

<sup>99</sup> W.J. Humm, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 2 October 1934

<sup>100</sup> Humm, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 30 January 1940



**Figure 23: Jack Humm, well-known horticulturist, manager of Nairns Nurseries and *Press* gardening columnist 1934 to 1945. Source: Allan Hale, *Pioneer Nurserymen of New Zealand : compiled for the 50th anniversary of the New Zealand Horticultural Trades Association (Inc.)* (Wellington, 1955)**

Above all, Humm's particular interest with regards to soil building was with humus, and often with the 'bacterial action without which the soil cannot produce to its fullest capacity'.<sup>101</sup> 'Without humus no soil can be fully fertile. Mineral elements may be said to give the soil body, but humus gives the soil its life. Without humus bacterial activity cannot develop, and, therefore, the soil is not fully fertile.'<sup>102</sup> Hoeing and cultivating also stimulated bacterial life,<sup>103</sup> as could liming.<sup>104</sup> Mostly, however, Humm's solution was to keep humic content up.<sup>105</sup> In summary, his view was that 'humus is the life of the soil'.<sup>106</sup> Humm believed that in his work he was 'under Divine control', and later stated that 'you can't be a non-believer and work in a nursery with plants. I often think about these things in the quiet at night. That's when the angels work on you'.<sup>107</sup> His devotion to stimulating soil life was part of this spirituality, which finds resonance with the development of the compost movement.

Despite this growing emphasis, the rotting of waste materials to form humus created a quandary. Sinclair wrote at length on manuring in 1934, stating that fresh manure should be dug in during the autumn or winter, otherwise rotted manure should be applied in spring. This rotted manure was usually horse manure, which heated up more readily than other forms. To prevent loss of ammonia, the heap should either be turned, or covered with soil.<sup>108</sup> Otherwise, Sinclair did not teach the keeping of 'heaps' in the garden: waste materials were always either

<sup>101</sup> Humm, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 18 January 1938

<sup>102</sup> Humm, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 25 January 1938

<sup>103</sup> Humm, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 25 October 1938; 17 January 1939; 24 January 1939; 4 April 1939; 18 April 1939; 12 March 1940; 9 July 1940

<sup>104</sup> Humm, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 28 March 1939

<sup>105</sup> Humm, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 22 February 1938; 14 February, 1939

<sup>106</sup> Humm, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 7 March 1939

<sup>107</sup> Humm, quoted in 'A Plant Man and His Philosophy', *The Christchurch Star*, 14 June 1962

<sup>108</sup> Sinclair, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 24 July 1934

to be burned or immediately trenched. Humm was more concerned about the existence of such waste materials. In 1938, for example, he commanded: 'Do not leave rubbish heaps about in the garden, as they harbour all types of insect pests'.<sup>109</sup> By 1940, Humm seemed to acknowledge the place of the 'refuse heap' in the garden, but insisted that no diseased foliage be applied to it:

Keep the garden sanitary by promptly burning all diseased foliage and rubbish. Rubbish harbours harmful insects and fungus pests. If diseased foliage is put on the refuse heap to rot down, this does not destroy the disease. When the contents of the refuse heap are dug in, the disease will again appear, and attack the plants. The best place for diseased foliage is the fire, and as soon as possible. Keep the refuse heap sanitary by dusting hortnap freely after each lot of rubbish is added. Hortnap not only destroys disease but prevents it from beginning...<sup>110</sup>

Two months later, he reiterated the point:

Many people place all garden refuse in the compost heap to rot down with the intention of digging this in when decayed. This is quite right if the refuse is free from disease, but if not, remember that the rotting down process does not destroy fungus disease. If this compost is dug in the disease which it contains will be sure to reappear when the conditions are congenial to its development.<sup>111</sup>

Others agreed that the compost was unhygienic. One correspondent to the *Christchurch Star-Sun*, using the pseudonym 'Swatter', asked in late 1943 whether compost heaps might attract flies.<sup>112</sup> An answer from Lance McCaskill did not satisfy Swatter's concerns.<sup>113</sup> A few days later Swatter stated, anxiously, that when 'epidemic disease is possible, the fly is a real danger; and known sources of its production should not be allowed to exist. Compost heaps are a direct menace and should be treated accordingly.' The writer went on to state that compost piles were 'not essential in the past and a good garden can be had without their aid, if elbow grease is not spared and the hoe is used freely.'<sup>114</sup> In response, W. T. Wainman (a committee member of the Canterbury branch of the New Zealand Humic Compost Club) wrote that it was the old, slow-rotting rubbish heaps that were the problem, and that '[n]inety per cent of the backyards have one of these.'<sup>115</sup>

Swatter's outcry against compost is an indication of its increasing profile. Compost advocates were contrasting their scientific process with the out-of-date heaps Humm was writing about:

<sup>109</sup> Humm, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 8 November 1938; see also 1 March 1938

<sup>110</sup> Humm, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 2 January 1940

<sup>111</sup> Humm, 'In the Garden', *The Press*, 12 March 1940

<sup>112</sup> Swatter, 'Flies and Compost', *The Press*, 30 December 1943

<sup>113</sup> Editor's response to Swatter's letter, *The Press*, 30 December 1943

<sup>114</sup> Swatter, 'Flies and Compost', *The Press*, 3 January 1944. This letter

<sup>115</sup> W. T. Wainman, 'Flies and Compost', *The Press*, 6 January 1944



‘Compost in the old days was obtained from the rubbish heap, but the rubbish took a long time to rot. Composting is a much better and quicker method’.<sup>116</sup> Just as the war in Europe ground to a halt T. D. Lennie, now president of the Canterbury branch of the new Compost Club, took over the *Press* column from Humm. The Club, for a month or so, had already had its own column in the *Press*, written under the pseudonym ‘Humus’ by committee members on a roster basis.<sup>117</sup> In it, committee members had been able to vent their views freely:

The great improvements noted by scientific agriculturists of incorporating compost in the soil have been so startling that some persons have become possessed with the idea that compost has some mysterious or magical quality. The truth in this idea depends upon whether one looks upon the matter from the point of view of natural fact or of superstition. However, as Sir Albert Howard says: “Compost is life, and life is a mystery.” ...Failure to return to the soil all that was taken out has created many problems. Most of our social ills can be traced back to the soil.<sup>118</sup>

Mainstream gardening publications also took up the Albert Howard compost. The Reed pamphlet on *Home Garden Fertilisers*, published in 1943, discussed ‘Sir Albert Howard’s methods of making compost’, stating that they ‘may well prove [to be] the best method, and there is no doubt that it has been applied with great success in many different parts of the world’.<sup>119</sup> Howard’s compost appeared in Government publications as well. Although his name was not used and some of the details vary considerably, the characteristic layering of ingredients, and the resultant heating of the heap, is very clearly derivative. W. P. Carman’s 1942 pamphlet *Wartime Gardening in NZ* is a good example.

When adding the later layers of refuse, cover them with soil dug from a second hole alongside the first. If you have no fowl manure and cannot obtain any, nor any farmyard manure, sprinkle each layer with blood and bone or spread the sulphate of ammonia more thickly... By the time you have finished off your heap, the interaction of vegetable matter, animal manure, chemicals, water and air will have set off a rapid fermentation, which will break down the rubbish quickly, and all weed seeds and the roots of perennial weeds will be destroyed. If the heap gets so hot in a few weeks that you cannot keep your hand on it, turn it over after a month...<sup>120</sup>

Even the scientific compost heap, as formulated by Howard, underwent rather rapid revision. By 1944 expediency was gaining ground over quality: ‘Compost heaps may be either simple or complex’ a Government guide offered.<sup>121</sup> The Canterbury branch of the Compost Club, in mid 1945, suggested to its readers that ‘too strict adherence to the methods advised in our text

<sup>116</sup> B. Sprange, quote in NZHCCCB, Minutes of General Meeting, 9 December 1943, MB 259, *MB*

<sup>117</sup> NZHCCCB, Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting, 17 May 1945, MB 259, *MB*

<sup>118</sup> C.E. St John, ‘Compost Notes’, *The Press*, 21 April 1945. This is the only one of these columns not written under the pseudonym.

<sup>119</sup> T. S. Waugh, *Home Garden Fertilisers and How to Use Them* (Wellington, 1945 ed.), p.12

<sup>120</sup> W. P. Carman, *Wartime Gardening in NZ* (Wellington, 1942), p.8. *CCL*

<sup>121</sup> D. K. Pritchard, *Vegetable Growing in the Home Garden* (Wellington, 1944), p.18, *CCL*

books' could be problematic, 'for it can be said that while these methods are exemplary, great results can be obtained by following less orthodox lines. The great thing is to use, instead of wasting, the organic material that is available.'<sup>122</sup> Whichever specific mode of making it was preferred, compost was, from 1942 or 1943, a matter of great interest to garden experts, whereas previously it had not been.<sup>123</sup> By 1945 Lennie's gardening column rejoiced in autumn's falling leaves, though he added that '[a]ll seasons should be compost time'. Instead of this, he said, one found 'too many fires, in both the country and the town, destroying much that could be made use of incorporated into the soil. When we burn vegetable growth the greater proportion... goes up in smoke and only the remaining 3 per cent. returns to the soil.'<sup>124</sup> This constituted a major turn-around of opinion about how to maintain soil fertility.

The *Compost Magazine* claimed in 1947 that due largely to the Society's efforts New Zealanders were now 'compost-minded'.<sup>125</sup> David Combridge spoke that year on 3YA about making a compost heap: 'Once the listener has used this method of disposing of garden and household refuse, and has witnessed what splendid vegetables and flowers can be grown, no other method of plant feeding will be adopted.'<sup>126</sup> In a confidential special committee meeting in October 1949, Guy Chapman expressed his opinion that the Compost Club had achieved its aims and should now wind up.<sup>127</sup> By 1950 the compost could be spoken of as 'a common exhibit in many gardens', even though 'it is not turned over quickly enough as the modern practice advises.'<sup>128</sup> Dorothea Turner referred to composters as artists as opposed to decorators, saying 'the new art grew intensely'.<sup>129</sup> Even the Department of Agriculture sang compost's praises. A. G. Kennelly, who had been part of the Christchurch Dig for Victory campaign, wrote in a Department bulletin for home gardeners: 'In recent years the making of compost in home gardens has become increasingly popular and important.' He assured

<sup>122</sup> 'Compost Notes', *The Press*, 9 June 1945

<sup>123</sup> Helen Leach also mentions that the 1943 edition of the *Yates' Garden Guide* included a reference to humus-building, which was tempered, by 1950, with references to artificial fertilisers, chemical herbicides and other pesticides. She refers to this mention of humus as an 'organic message'. Stating that by 1957 artificial compost activators were promoted over animal manures, to show that the 'organic message' was dropped overlooks the point that compost, i.e. humus building, was still, even then, considered important. Helen Leach, 'The Twentieth Century Home Garden' in Pawson and Brooking, p.223. It should not be assumed that the compost movement and the organic movement were the same, although the origins of the later organic movement held the same objectives.

<sup>124</sup> Lennie, 'Garden Notes', *The Press*, 12 May 1945

<sup>125</sup> 'Notes and Comment' in *Compost Magazine*, Vol.6, No.5, September 1947, p.1

<sup>126</sup> David Combridge, 'Making a Compost Heap', 3YA broadcast, c1947, D6997, RNZSA

<sup>127</sup> Special Meeting of the National Council of the New Zealand Humic Compost Club, October 1949. That it did not was partly due to Dove-Meyer Robinson's determination, as president, that the Society must not give up until its functions were picked up by Government.

<sup>128</sup> Lennie, *The Press*, December 8 1950

<sup>129</sup> Dorothea Turner, 'Suburban Garden Change', 3YA broadcast, 1950, D2231.41, RNZSA

gardeners that ‘the properly constructed compost heap offers a cheap, odourless, and hygienic method by which waste material can be converted to vitally needed humus’.<sup>130</sup>

From Sinclair and Humm’s hesitancy about the hygiene of keeping piles of decaying plant matter in the garden in the 1930s and early 1940s, by 1950 compost bins were apparently a common feature of Christchurch gardens. Indeed, Dove Meyer Robinson, club president and later mayor of Auckland, in an address to the Club’s membership in 1952, made the following remarks about the national progress of the movement:

Composting is now an acknowledged and “respectable” activity, recognised by Government departments and the public alike, as of very great benefit to the community. To-day marked a milestone in our progress. In our morning paper, I saw an advertisement inserted by the Department of Health, advising the public that the best way to prevent flies breeding in rubbish, is to compost it in properly made compost heaps.

This is a far cry from those days only a few years ago when the Department of Health publicly condemned compost heaps as being the cause of much fly-breeding. This example of co-operation by a Government department is a heartening sign which all of us welcome...<sup>131</sup>

That there was a clear progression from ‘cold composting’, which Sinclair and Humm were fearful of, to ‘hot’ or activated composting, of the sort developed by Albert Howard in India and publicised by Lennie and others seems clear.

### **Spiritual Sustenance**

In part, the compost heap helped resolve the problem of declining access to animal manure with the growth of the motor car. Most of the motivating force behind the movement transcended such practicalities, however. Yeo Tresillian Shand, who launched the Canterbury branch of the Compost Club, was a Christchurch farmer descended from John Shand of Riccarton Road, who had arrived on board the *Isabella Hercus* in 1851.<sup>132</sup> Yeo had been a founding member of the Canterbury branch of the Forest and Bird Society, and lived in Burwood, for which he was a member of the Anglican Synod from 1940.<sup>133</sup> In 1941 he gave an address at a Christchurch Deanery conference which was extremely critical of what he saw

<sup>130</sup> A.G. Kennelly, *The Home Vegetable Garden* (Wellington, 1953), p.38, Christchurch Botanic Gardens Library.

<sup>131</sup> Dove-Meyer Robinson, ‘To Members’, 24 November 1952. DMR Papers, Box 4, 100.34 (b), ACL

<sup>132</sup> ‘St Peter’s Anglican Church, Upper Riccarton’, Richard Greenaway, <http://library.christchurch.org.nz/Guides/Cemeteries/UpperRiccanton/graves.asp>. Accessed 7 June 2006.

<sup>133</sup> Lesley Shand, interviewed 16 February 2006. See also Richard Greenaway, *Burwood: All Saints’ Church 1877-1977* (Christchurch, 1977), pp.40-41

as the pillage of New Zealand's agricultural soils for the benefit of British capital. His sermon, reprinted in *Compost Magazine* and entitled *The Crime Against the Land*, was that the dysfunctional British imperial economy had led to a cheapening of agriculture, a worsening of human (British and Pakeha) health, an environmental catastrophe and a consequent spiritual fall from grace. He quoted a 1941 report of the Malvern Conference called by the Archbishop of York: 'The existing industrial order, with the acquisitive temper characteristic of our society, tends to recklessness and sacrilege in the treatment of natural resources,' and went on, in his own words:

The delusion is that cheapness leads to plenty. But of what use is plenty of rubbish? In the strain for this ghastly cheapness, a man's relationship to the soil becomes almost purely predatory instead of by God's laws a process of symbiosis by which everything that has had life has life again. Take our wheat-growing as an example – and there are enough of these: cheapness demands spoliation by doping with chemical stimulants as a substitute for muck or green soiling; cheapness demands the straw be burnt and the stubble set on fire, bringing death by starvation to the earthworm – that humble servant of God and ally of mankind – followed by leaching and erosion and gradual death to the soil itself, as a final burnt-offering to this god of cheapness.<sup>134</sup>

Deforestation and erosion were the key issues, a point deriving authority from Jacks and Whyte's *The Rape of the Earth* and supported by organisations such as the Forest and Bird Protection Society and the Canterbury Progress League.<sup>135</sup> Indeed, *Forest and Bird* publicised the Compost Club's aims and strong links were retained between the organisations.<sup>136</sup> 'New Zealand,' wrote Shand, 'since its invasion by the Christians a century ago, has been largely transposed from a beautiful garden to a stamping-ground for the hard-faced business man and exploiter. **Millions of acres stripped of all it has to give...**'<sup>137</sup> Whereas Maori lived in harmony with the earth, holding land in communal possession in a 'sacred trust', Christians (meaning Pakeha) had 'out-gothed the Goths' in rude vandalism.<sup>138</sup> 'Magnificent forest was ruthlessly destroyed' around Gisborne, for example, where much of the hillside, English grasses and sheep had subsequently collapsed into the harbour. 'And into those same wide

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<sup>134</sup> Yeo Shand, *Crime Against the Land* (Christchurch, 1941), p.24, *CCL*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7, *CCL*; Jacks and Whyte, *The Rape of the Earth* (London, 1939); 'The Proposed River Control Bill and the Problem – Soil Erosion', *F&B*, No.61, August 1941, pp.9-10

<sup>136</sup> 'Quarterly Newsletter', *F&B*, August 1948, p.6; Dove Meyer Robinson maintained correspondence with Forest and Bird during the period 1947-8, DMR Papers, Box 6, 100.60, *ACL*. As he wrote to Sir Albert Howard in 1947, he believed that 'allied' organisations like Forest and Bird and the Food Value League should be jointly convened in a nationally representative body to put pressure on the Government. Dove Meyer Robinson to Sir Albert Howard, 14 August 1947, DMR Papers, Box 8, 100.75 (d), *ACL*

<sup>137</sup> Shand, *Crime Against the Land*, p.28

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, p.28

open spaces of the Pacific a lot more of our adopted country is being pushed in our blindness – **the soil we invoke the God of Battles to help us defend.**<sup>139</sup>

As well as an ecological criticism of the British Empire, Shand offered a eugenicist criticism. ‘Britain gets cheap food for her industrial population, [and] ruins her farmers and the soil they cultivate by its importation’. Even so, ‘nearly half of Britain’s population, have only the scantiest access to meat of any kind. Eleven million were actually on a food basis below the minimum requirements of the Board of Health.’ The effects of this were supposedly visible at Dunkirk where the defeated British were a ‘skinny, under-nourished, under-developed lot, with every third man wearing glasses, and the Nazis [were], healthy and bronzed, well-fed and developed to the last ounce of physical fitness.’<sup>140</sup>

A clearer statement of intent was given in an article published in the *Compost Magazine*’s third issue. ‘Since the war, and curiously enough only since the war, we have heard a great deal about a “New Order,” which is to come after the war. What that New Order is like will depend upon what we – the people – insist on having.’ Discontent with the status quo was clearly expressed. ‘In anything like a commonsense civilisation the production of 100% health-giving foodstuffs would be put before everything else.’ Ensuring this, claimed the article under the sub-heading ‘A Revolution Needed’, ‘would mean a revolution on the land, for it seems that healthy food cannot be grown by a commercialized agriculture with money as its only standard of value.’ The writer suggested that in order to produce better food ‘we shall have to go through with whatever changes are necessary to make the soil healthy. There is no other way’, and concluded:

It may mean reducing and eventually prohibiting the use of artificial chemical fertilisers. It may mean that the community will have to resume greater power over the land. It may mean dispossessing – as painlessly as possible – people whose sole interest in the land is to draw money from it... We are all in this together, for no class escapes the results of having half-dead food grown on a half-dead soil.<sup>141</sup>

Radical changes to land ownership or use laws for the greater good were clearly on the agenda.

Such language compelled no less than A. R. D. Fairburn to accept the editorship of the magazine from 1944, for which Guy Chapman had offered him £30 per year. Fairburn was able to relate composting ‘firmly to his metaphysics’. For Fairburn, ‘the community that was

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., p.17

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., p.5

<sup>141</sup> ‘Food or Profits?’, *Compost Magazine*, July 1942, p.3

founded on industrialized farming was spiritually barren... In the final analysis Rex's programme as editor was to call in question the very basis of industrial society.'<sup>142</sup> This was clearly reflected in the material included. In a book review of H. J. Massingham's *This Plot of Earth*, the reviewer described the author as a 'gardener-philosopher'.

He not only sees clearly that big business, science (so-called) and bureaucracy are in alliance against small ownership and individuality; he also says so. He speaks about the "enormous interests whose business it is to see that organic husbandry shall become obsolete..." ...Though the hosts of God may be in the background he still believes that they **are** encamped around the dwellings of the just. He does not merely present the new-old world as the only permanent world; he makes it appear a desirable and happy world. Man has fallen and his plot of earth lies outside paradise, But [sic] Mr. Massingham's message is that man can so order his little plot of earth that he can at any time lift up his eyes from it and see the Gates of Eden.<sup>143</sup>

The 'paragon plots' and 'little paradises' seen by the beautifiers were not seen by the composters. As in Shand's pamphlet of 1941, the perceived conflict between the vested interests of industry and Christian principles was starkly highlighted.

There is a close relationship between the stream of ideas enshrined in this material and contemporaneous discussions occurring within the Church itself. The National Council of Churches in New Zealand produced a series of pamphlets during World War Two dealing with precisely these issues. Brian Low's pamphlet *Land and People in Christian Order* condemned the commercialization of agriculture, which had endangered 'the vulnerable soil'. The clearances of mountain pasture and forested hills leading to such disasters as the 1938 Esk Valley (Hawkes Bay) floods contributed to the familiar refrain<sup>144</sup> about 'the disorders that have arisen both from ignorance and from the absence of Christian purpose, and why we must achieve a right relationship to the land.'<sup>145</sup> Land nationalization was mooted as was the reorganization of cities in a sentiment redolent of Ebenezer Howard's Garden City idea. Cities 'can be full of light and air and space if we care enough to make them so... Here Christians must insist on the importance of human beings and their healthiest development as being above all the claims of money measures... All the things which may be wanted in any back-to-the-land movement must also be available to those who are *not* farmers'.<sup>146</sup> Indeed, further reinforcing the commonalities between the composters and proponents of this Christian order material, readers were directed both to Jacks and Whyte, and Lord Northborne, which Shand referred to.

<sup>142</sup> Denys Trussell, *Fairburn* (Auckland, 1984), pp.198-199.

<sup>143</sup> S. Sagar, "This Plot of Earth", *Compost Magazine*, Vol.5, No.1, January/February 1946, pp.7-8

<sup>144</sup> Brian Low, *Land and People in Christian Order* (Christchurch, 1943), pp.14-17

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.9-10

When Shand died in 1958, Steffano Webb replaced him as Synodsmen for Burwood.<sup>147</sup> Webb was a vice-president of the Canterbury branch of the Compost Club, and was its president in 1955. In this vein it is important to note that the minister responsible for the Dig for Victory campaign in New Zealand, Ben Roberts, was a compost enthusiast who believed that ‘as health begins in the soil, we must accept our responsibilities as individuals and help to maintain its fertility by returning to it all organic wastes and reduce our use of chemical fertilisers’. He was remembered as one who ‘truly lived up to the belief given him in his youth by a Christian father that “In God we move and have our being”’.<sup>148</sup> For many, composting was a matter of faith.

### Compost in Christchurch

Shand organised the meeting of 6 July 1943 to establish a branch of the Compost Club in Canterbury.<sup>149</sup> The secretary of the Canterbury Progress League, P. R. Climie, assisted considerably in this endeavour, and the secretary of the New Zealand Humic Compost Club (and Guy Chapman’s successor as president), Tom Ashby, was present as well, direct from Auckland. The most important guest, however, was the Deputy Mayor of Christchurch, M. E. Lyons, who chaired the evening. He had already shown his interest in garden-related activities as a member of the City Council’s Vegetable Committee.<sup>150</sup> Significantly, he had also already raised the ire of the Christchurch branch of the New Zealand Women’s Food Value League, Guy Chapman’s other organisation. The League had complained to the Council about Lyons’ behaviour, saying their meeting ‘deplores the obstructive attitude adopted by Councillors Lyons and Denton towards the question of a Civic Vegetable Campaign.’<sup>151</sup> His comments at the inaugural meeting of the Canterbury branch of the Compost Club, while consistent with Club philosophy, were hardly at all radical. He was concerned that ‘we should have a clear conception of our duty to the soil’,<sup>152</sup> but nothing beyond this.

At the second meeting of the interim committee, no doubt to Shand’s disappointment, it ‘was generally agreed that controversial issues should be avoided during the initial stages of

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<sup>147</sup> Richard Greenway, p.41

<sup>148</sup> Enid Roberts, *Remembered: The Life and Work of Ben Roberts, M.P. Minister of Agriculture and Marketing, N.Z., 1943-46* (Masterton, 1965), Preface

<sup>149</sup> ‘Branch Notes’ in *Compost Magazine*, March/April 1944, p.14

<sup>150</sup> He had been part of the committee since its first meeting on May 11 1942. Christchurch City Council Minute Book No.1, CH 380/73, 22882, *ANZCRO*

<sup>151</sup> 19 October 1942, Christchurch City Council Minute Book No.1, CH 380/73, 22989, *ANZCRO*; the statement was also printed by the media, see *The Press*, October 9 1942

<sup>152</sup> ‘Humic Compost Club: Branch Formed in Christchurch’, *The Press*, 7 July 1943

promoting the interests of the movement and placing it on a sound footing.’<sup>153</sup> Lennie became branch chair, and Morris Barnett joined the committee as a vice-president in August.<sup>154</sup> By September a public meeting of the branch voted unanimously in favour of supporting the Dig for Victory Campaign.<sup>155</sup> It will be noted, too, that the term used was Dig for Victory, and not Vegetable Campaign, even though Dig for Victory was still one year away from being introduced into the South Island. The branch committee was therefore comprised of a number of horticulturists with access to political machinery and the media. Barnett and Lennie were arguably the most significant. The former was able to put the resources of the Botanic Gardens and of certain parks at the disposal of the branch; the latter was able to use his radio show on 3YA to promote the branch’s aims. There is little doubt that interest amongst branch members extended beyond composting for the suburban backyard – the farming community needed attention – but the reality was that the focus was fixed on suburbia and the City Council’s Civic Vegetable Campaign and Dig for Victory effort.

Membership climbed steadily in the initial months of the branch’s existence – when the Civic Vegetable Campaign was well under way, and this was recorded faithfully by the branch secretary, William Bell (Table 4). It rocketed from about one hundred in mid 1943 to more than three hundred in less than a year, and peaked at nearly four hundred and fifty by April 1945. Meeting attendance was healthy as well; between August 1943 and late 1945 numbers fluctuated between fifty and one hundred. A definite decline in these attendance numbers set in from the start of 1947 (arguably from early 1946), with membership numbers in decline from 1945, dropping sharply in early 1948. The initial interest in the new movement was therefore definitely linked to the Council’s Dig for Victory campaign and the promotion that surrounded it. This early urban focus therefore helps explain why it came to be thought of as a suburban gardening club, when it had sought to change the basis of agricultural production.

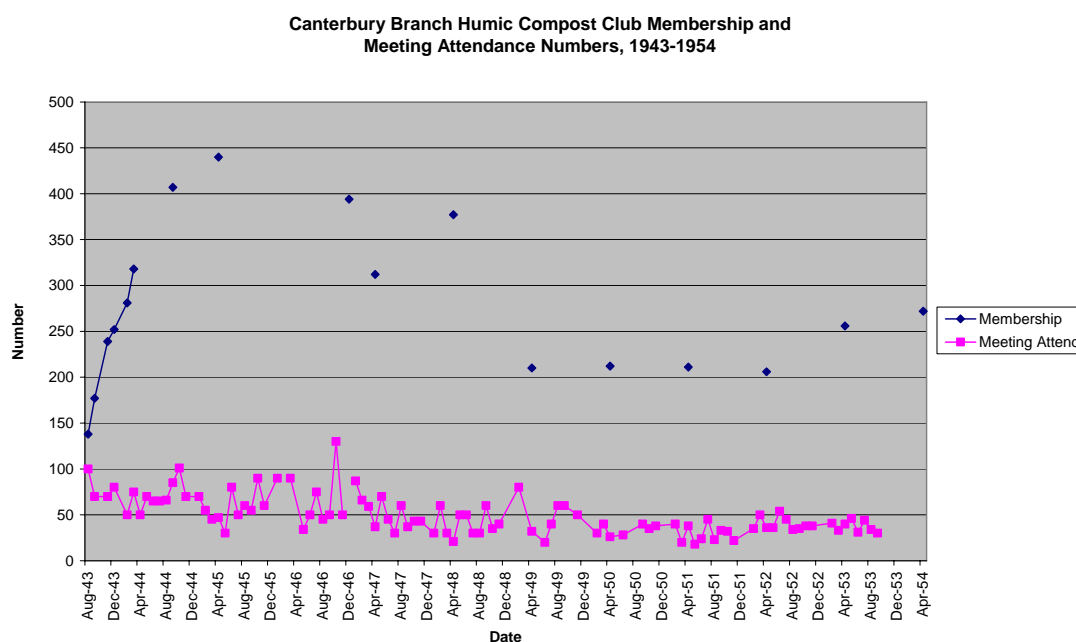
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<sup>153</sup> NZHCCCB, Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, 19 July 1943, MB 259, *MB*

<sup>154</sup> ‘Humic Compost Club: Christchurch Branch’, *The Press*, 17 August 1943; *CSS*, 17 August 1943

<sup>155</sup> NZHCCCB, Minutes of General Meeting, 13 September 1943, MB 259, *MB*





**Table 4: Membership and Meeting Attendance of Christchurch Branch, Humic Compost Club, 1943-1954**

That the Club was associated with a civic campaign is significant here; it was not just a question of public exposure. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that the organisation's major opportunity for exposure in the media did not occur until the week Germany surrendered, when Lennie took over the gardening column in the *Press*. Significantly, and contrary to what might have been expected, it was from exactly this time that membership numbers and meeting attendances both began to fall. That is to say, increased exposure by itself was inadequate, without the civic hype, in supporting the Club. The Abberley Park plots tended by the Women's Land Army, which the Compost Club had helped maintain, were removed,<sup>156</sup> and no further use of the Club was made for publicly stated civic purposes. In other words, its value by this time was seen purely in terms of its part in the war effort, a fundamentally different perspective from that of either the Women's Food Value League or the Compost Club, who struggled for some time to find a new public site for their bins.<sup>157</sup> When the war ended, Barnett resigned from the committee.

By 1948 branch membership had fallen off, on the surface at least an indication that public interest in composting had been merely an ephemeral phenomenon associated with the war. Nevertheless, it was Lennie's opinion that the branch 'continues to wield an important influence in the Composting Movement, which is now firmly established', even if 'the

<sup>156</sup> NZHCCCB, Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, 21 March 1946, MB 259, *MB*

<sup>157</sup> The committee finally gave this up in 1953. NZHCCCB, Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, 5 March 1953, MB 259, *MB*

membership register does not keep pace'.<sup>158</sup> From the evidence thus far reviewed, it seems fair to say that Lennie was not being unduly optimistic, at least in terms of encouraging suburban gardeners to make compost. Ordinary backyards across the city became sites of a new activity whose meaning became as wedded to the idea of civic virtue as had the high colour flower displays that greeted the Queen on her 1954 visit to the city.



**Figure 24: Canterbury Branch of New Zealand Humic Compost Club tent, possible A&P Show, c1952. A popular exhibit.**

**Source: Soil & Health Association of New Zealand Archive, Head Office, Auckland**

1954 was a highpoint for the Christchurch composters, as Lennie finally relinquished the local presidency only to become National President, with headquarters shifting from Auckland to the Garden City. Lennie attended the Royal Garden Party on behalf of the Society<sup>159</sup> and, in a triumphal conclusion, received an M.B.E. for his services to horticulture. But here it was really his work within the Horticultural Society and the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture that marked Lennie out for this praise, though the Compost Club thought hopefully the composting work had been important too.<sup>160</sup> Actually, his devotion to the compost movement was doubted even by some of his own committee members. George Maslin, for example, said 'I always never looked on T. D. Lennie as a very ardent proponent of compost gardening, but he called himself one nevertheless. He was all right.'<sup>161</sup> Lennie

<sup>158</sup> Lennie, 'Annual Report' for the NZHCCCB, April 1948, MB 259, *MB*

<sup>159</sup> NZHCCCB, Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, 11 February 1954, MB 259, *MB*

<sup>160</sup> NZHCCCB, Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, 10 February 1955, MB 259, *MB*

<sup>161</sup> George Maslin, interviewed 13 August 2003

was certainly a believer in artificial fertilisers, which he vigorously defended at Club meetings.<sup>162</sup> Jack Whitelaw explained how Lennie dominated the committee so that ‘the situation arose, more or less evolved, that no one was prepared to sort of put their name forward as a possible replacement.’<sup>163</sup> Lennie’s spats with Dove Meyer Robinson made for strained relationships between the Auckland and Christchurch branches,<sup>164</sup> and resulted eventually in his capturing the movement as Dominion president.



**Figure 25: T.D. Lennie, *Press* gardening columnist, and President of the Canterbury Branch of the New Zealand Humic Compost Club**

**Source: Allan Hale, *Pioneer Nurserymen of New Zealand : compiled for the 50th anniversary of the New Zealand Horticultural Trades Association (Inc.)* (Wellington, 1955)**

## Composting the Garden City

Ebenezer Howard had factored town waste disposal into his original Garden City plans, making it clear that waste materials should be utilised to manure productive land.<sup>165</sup> Albert Howard championed the same idea in his *Agricultural Testament* of 1940:

The garden city and water-borne sewage are a contradiction in terms. Water-borne sewage has developed because of overcrowding and the absence of cultivated land. Remove over-crowding and the case for this wasteful system disappears. In the

<sup>162</sup> The issue was discussed in 1946, and it ‘was thought the policy of the Branch should be to encourage the use of Compost – leaving the artificials to suffer in comparison.’ NZHCCCB, Minutes of General Meeting, 25 July 1946. The following month the Club’s executive decided that ‘it would be unwise to adopt an aggressive attitude towards artificials.’ NZHCCCB, Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, 8 August 1946. In an open debate a year later, the branch president, T. D. Lennie, argued strongly in favour of artificial fertilisers. NZHCCCB, Minutes of General Meeting, 28 August 1947, MB 259, MB

<sup>163</sup> Jack Whitelaw, interviewed 20 August 2003

<sup>164</sup> The Canterbury branch committee placed on record its objection to Dove Meyer Robinson’s ‘dominating conduct as chairman and to the shockingly inadequate treatment given to remits’ in 1949. NZHCCCB, Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, 3 November 1949, MB 259, MB. Lennie wrote to Robinson in 1950 telling him that ‘Whatever some of your members may think of the aggressive attitude and views of the Canterbury Executive, the steps referred to were taken after due deliberation by delegates in open conference, but the National Executive has not taken them much further...’

Lennie to Robinson, 16 October 1950, DMR Papers, Box 147, 334.3, ACL

<sup>165</sup> Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (London, 1902 ed.), pp.25, 32-33

garden city there is no need to get rid of wastes by the expensive methods of the town. The soil will do it far more efficiently and at far less cost. At the same time, the fertility of the garden city areas will be raised and large crops of fresh vegetables and fruit – one of the factors underlying health – will be automatically provided.<sup>166</sup>

Albert Howard believed that the transformation necessary would start first in the colonies, where there was ample space, and in his correspondence with Dove Meyer Robinson in New Zealand he was optimistic that New Zealand would lead the way. Christchurch appeared to be adhering to the original principles of the Garden City rather more strongly than has been recognised. Dove Meyer Robinson wrote to Albert Howard in September 1947 to tell him of the advances in New Zealand since the last election, and in particular about the new Minister of Health, Christchurch M.P. Mabel Howard:

Miss Howard has been interested in our work for some time and last Wednesday she told me that she was behind us 100%. Miss Howard says she has always hated the idea of using artificial fertilizers and she is a great believer in organics. For some years before her election to Parliament she was a member of the Christchurch Drainage Board which runs a sewage plant and she has always maintained that the cattle on that farm are the healthiest in New Zealand. She now sees that the composting of sewage and garbage is a great advancement over the sewage farm method of utilisation... [O]ther members of Cabinet are becoming convinced that it is not only a question of utilising organic wastes, but a question affecting the health and economic welfare of the whole community...<sup>167</sup>

By 1947, then, it seemed to progressive environmentalists that Christchurch was in fact leading the way in terms of urban sustainability, demonstrated in its sewerage treatment and its Member of Parliament's keen interest in what was by now becoming an 'organic' movement. Compost, emerging in Christchurch out of the Civic Vegetable Campaign and Dig for Victory, was a most suitable adjunct to the city's image as a Garden City.<sup>168</sup>

It is equally clear, however, that the 'Garden City' meant different things to different people. The beautifiers had never employed the phrase as Ebenezer Howard had intended it and, while *The City Beautiful* ran a couple of reports on guest lectures by the Humic Compost Club, these emphasised the possibilities for beautification and neither human nor environmental wellbeing. That the talks were addressed to the Society's Dahlia Circle and the Chrysanthemum Society made this point doubly clear.<sup>169</sup> In no sense were Guy Chapman's aims either for the Women's Food Value League or the New Zealand Humic Compost Club

<sup>166</sup> Albert Howard, *An Agricultural Testament* (New York, 1943 ed.), p.115

<sup>167</sup> Dove Meyer Robinson to Albert Howard, 22 September 1947. DMR Papers, Box 8, 100.75 (d), *ACL*

<sup>168</sup> See also Matt Morris, 'Three Howards and an Organic Revolution', *Organic NZ*, May/June 2005, pp.58-59

<sup>169</sup> 'Humic Compost', *CB*, December 1946, p.10; 'Humic Compost – What is it?', *CB*, September 1947, p.22

fully embraced by the beautifiers. Vegetable production was stressed during World War Two to such an extent that it seemed abnormal, while compost-making as its corollary was transformed into an activity supplementing the beautifying agenda for a Garden City that was actually a city of beautiful gardens.

## **Conclusion**

Although World War Two is often understood as a time of increased interest in home vegetable production, in fact it is more rightly viewed as a period of debate about the proper use of land. The vegetable gardening campaigns, although well publicized, do not appear to have altered gardening behaviour markedly. Vegetable growing had been promoted by certain eugenist organisations prior to the war, and the Depression seemed to have a more direct impact on vegetable growing, making it essential. The war was critical, however, in radically altering notions of hygiene in the home. Prior to the outbreak of hostilities soil fertility was maintained with trenched manure, green manures and vegetable ash, but ‘heaps’ were seen as breeding grounds of flies and disease. ‘Hot’ composting emerged as a viable new technology, a scientific method for producing humus speedily. It was able to do this because, at both the national and local level, it benefited from increased exposure as an appendage to the war effort. The selectivity shown here by gardeners in what they chose to appropriate is pursued in greater detail in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine.

## 6

# Elements

### Introduction

Given the foregoing chapters, a *prima facie* case can be drawn, and indeed has been drawn by garden historians to date, that the initial settlement period, with its attendant economic hardship and need for subsistence gardens, was replaced fairly quickly by a second phase of beautification. The shifting emphasis of the exhibitions – by 1873 fruit and vegetables received barely any attention<sup>1</sup> – seems to confirm this impression. There were clearly alternative agendas at work as well, represented for example by the native planters and the composters. But actually, these could be co-opted into programmes for inculcating *civitas*, as signs of civic and national pride and for complementing beautification. There was a tension between a mode of economically non-productive gardening that was a form of cultural production – projecting Christchurch as linked to England’s mythological estates – and ecological and economic forms that unsettled the province’s, and nation’s, primary production basis. Yet this tension does not appear to have penetrated very far into the minds of most home gardeners.

The previous chapters have also pointed to a methodological problem encountered by many New Zealand garden historians to date, that is, the extreme biases prevalent in garden literature towards particular styles of choice. While gardening literature provides a strong basis upon which garden histories may be constructed, it cannot be taken as concrete evidence about what gardeners were doing in their gardens, but only about what garden writers *imagined* gardeners were doing. Indeed, it may even be said that this literature constitutes more what garden writers *hoped* gardeners were doing. The exact nature of the relationship between the ‘expert’ and the practitioner is a problem Hammett<sup>2</sup> noted in his Milwaukee study. In the present study, it has already been shown by looking at a range of garden literatures that not one but a variety of agendas were at play, each imagining they held the

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Horticultural Society’s Show’, *The Press*, 7 March 1873

<sup>2</sup> John Hammett, ‘Gardening and Meaningful Lives: An Ethnography of Milwaukee-Area Residential Vernacular Gardens’ (Ph.D., Northwestern University, 2002), p.130

ascendancy at different times. While inconclusive, this analysis immediately fragments the view about Christchurch as an English garden city usually recited by our garden historians.

To develop further this approach to testing the actual nature of gardening in Christchurch over the period in question, I employed a 'market-led' methodology: looking to the real estate market for clues. The assumption was that real estate agents would reflect in their advertisements precisely those features considered most desirable about a given property. Property advertisements, therefore, would reveal those aspects of gardens most demanded by the market. The prevalence of particular features, and any change in this over time, would give a much more robust indication of what gardeners were doing because less subject to the ideological or aesthetic proclivities of particular organisations and because the sample could be much larger and therefore much more representative.

Property advertisements, both 'For Sale' and 'To Let', as well as 'Auctions', were examined in the Christchurch *Press* in ten sample years: 1865, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905, 1915, 1925, 1935, 1945 and 1954. Those properties advertised in the first month of each year were recorded. January was selected both because it seemed logical to use the first month in the year, but also because as a summer month it is during the 'active' season of the property market and a good month for gardens as well. Only first advertisements were recorded; repeat advertisements were not included in the sample. Occasionally, repeat advertisements included more information, or altered the information slightly. Where this was the case, the new information, along with the date, was included along with the first set of information in square brackets so as to avoid doubling up while remaining transparent.

Only residential properties of six acres or less were recorded. Properties needed to include a dwelling of some description and not merely be a piece of land. Six acres is of course a very large residential property, but it was deemed necessary to establish this criterion so as to include residences in the early period where section sizes could be much larger than later on. The fact that only residential, as opposed to commercial, properties were included meant that almost no properties of this size were recorded for the later data sets. Apart from property size, one of the most noticeable features was the actual size of each data set. In 1865 only 20 residential properties of six acres or less were advertised, as opposed to 660 for 1954. Fluctuations between these dates presented themselves as well. In 1915, 195 properties fitting the criteria were recorded; this jumped to 313 in 1925, fell to 95 in 1935 and was back to 150 ten years later. Given the nature of the project, such variation in the size of data sets was inevitable. The actual size does not affect the quality of the data however, when treated as proportions of a total.

For each advertisement, eighteen data fields were available, of which four or five were normally utilized. For the most part, various descriptors were noted purely to avoid duplication and make references easily searchable. The data fields, apart from the advertisement date and whether the property was for sale or lease, allowed for capturing information on the location, street address, the agent, acreage, prices and house sizes and types, and access to water. More important, of course, were the fields relating to gardens. Here I employed categories derived from the advertisements themselves. Following Helen Leach, attention to these different elements was deemed the best way to understand changes in gardening. The elements of greatest importance were, however, quite different from those examined by Leach.<sup>3</sup> A category for unspecified 'gardens' was used, along with others for orchards and fruit, flowers, lawns, shrubs, trees, vegetables, glasshouses and vineries, rock gardens and ferneries. A total of 1,823 properties were recorded. Of a possible 32,814 fields, about 7,000 were used. Amidst these, 915 separate, explicit garden references were made. Data recorded in these 'garden fields' was qualitative in that the wording was copied from the advertisement. Thus instead of simply noting 'fruit', for example, one record for 1915 recorded 'apples, pears, plums, apricots, peaches'.<sup>4</sup> Qualitative as well as quantitative use could therefore be made of the information recorded, and in most instances a guide to the geographic distribution of different gardens was possible as well. The spreadsheets containing this information appear in Appendices 3.i.to 3.x.

### **Quantitative Analysis**

Table 5 (below) shows the number of references to gardens and their various elements over the sample period as proportions of the total number of properties fitting the criteria for each data set. Clearly, gardens did not feature as predominantly as might have been predicted in a city supposedly defined by its gardens. As a proportion of the total advertisements, references to gardens fluctuated between a high of 50 per cent. in 1865 and a low of 24 per cent. in 1945. On average, gardens figured in 36.7 per cent. of property advertisements across the period. Without undertaking a comparative analysis with another centre, it is impossible to say of course whether this is a relatively high or low figure, but it may certainly be stated that in Christchurch, gardens were never a consistently important selling point on the residential property market.

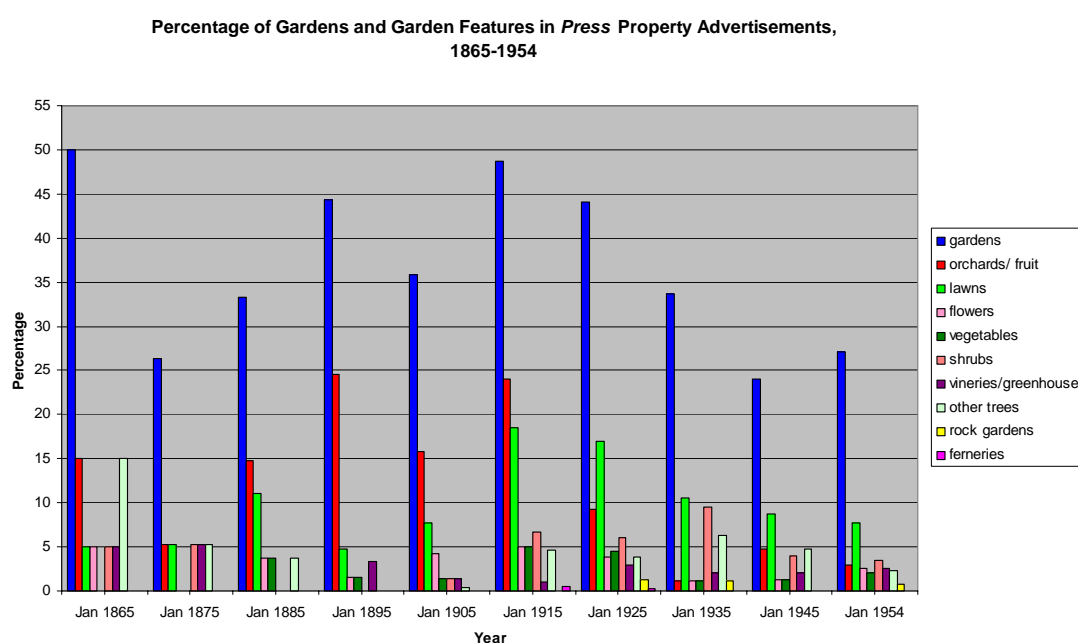
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<sup>3</sup> Helen Leach, 'Analysing Change in the New Zealand Home Garden – By Style or Element?', *The New Zealand Garden Journal*, Vol.1, No.2, 1996, pp.12-18

<sup>4</sup> *The Press*, 2 January 1915



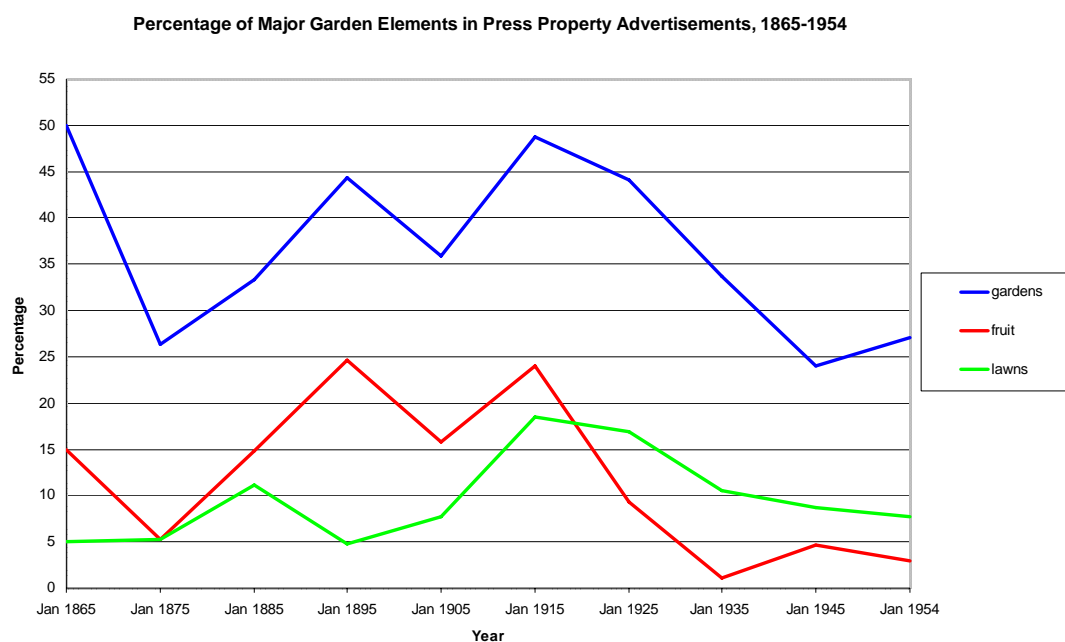
Table 5 also shows a turning point in interest in different types of gardening occurring from 1915, where the garden elements become collectively more pronounced components of the graph, with some components each sample year being referred to in more than five per cent of the total advertisements. It will be noted that, alongside the consistently highly rating fruit garden, these ‘five per cent plus’ garden components included lawns, flowers and shrubs. More important, however, is that the range of categories expanded from 1915 with the inclusion of ferneries and from 1925 with rock gardens. The graph also shows the early and sustained importance of fruit in the garden, the trend of which is shown more graphically in Table 6. Attention needs to be drawn to the fact that, despite a dip in 1875, the fruit garden was consistently the most important garden feature until 1915 when the lawn started seriously to contend for that honour; thereafter the lawn was easily the most important garden feature with the fruit garden fading into virtual irrelevance.



**Table 5: Proportions of Gardens and Garden Elements in the *Press* Property Advertisements, 1865-1954**

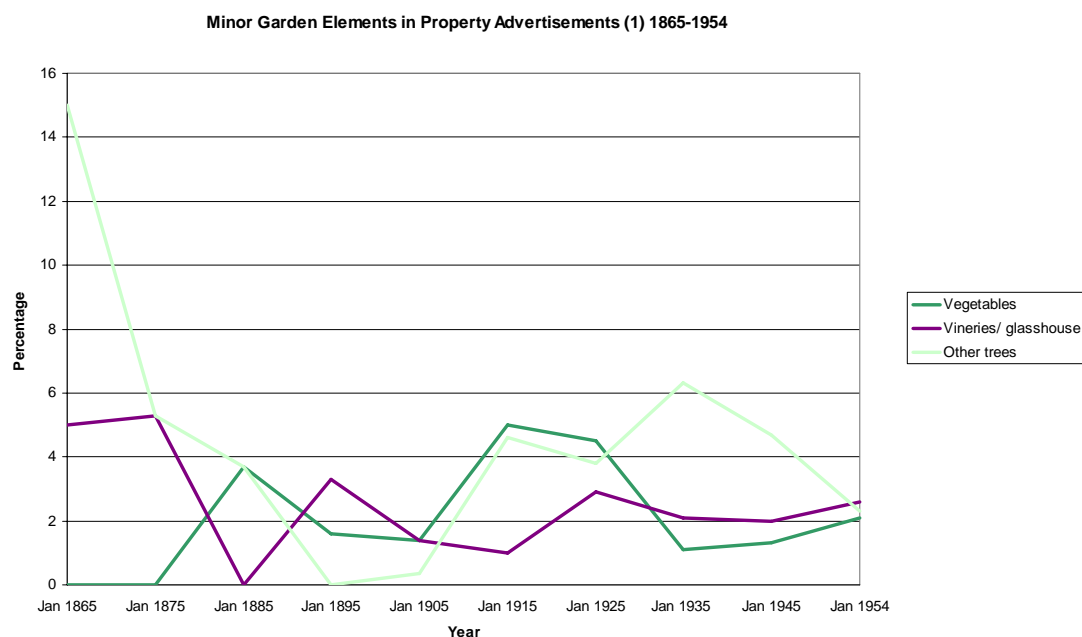
Table 6 (below) shows these trends more clearly. The three lines represent the total number of references to gardens in each of the sample years, the references to orchards and fruit, and references to lawns, including the occasional grass tennis court. The ‘gardens’ line shows spikes in 1895 and 1915, but overall the trend was downwards. This is matched by the ‘fruit’ line, where the peak was in 1895 at just under 25 per cent. and another strong showing in 1915 (24 per cent.). After 1935, fruit and orchards appeared in less than five per cent of advertisements. The trend for ‘lawns’, on the other hand, was upwards. Despite a dip in 1895, lawns maintained a good showing throughout the period, but become the preeminent garden element by 1925. It should also be noted that although they declined as a share of references

in total property advertisements from 1915, their decline is at a more gradual rate than that of total garden references or of orchards and fruit. The most significant point to note from this graph is that provisioning, represented by the home production of fruit, was considered the most important aspect of gardens by the property market until World War One; thereafter the lawn as a place of leisure and relaxation became central. The relative importance of both of these features, as proportions of total garden references, shows these trends in an even more pronounced way (Table 9).

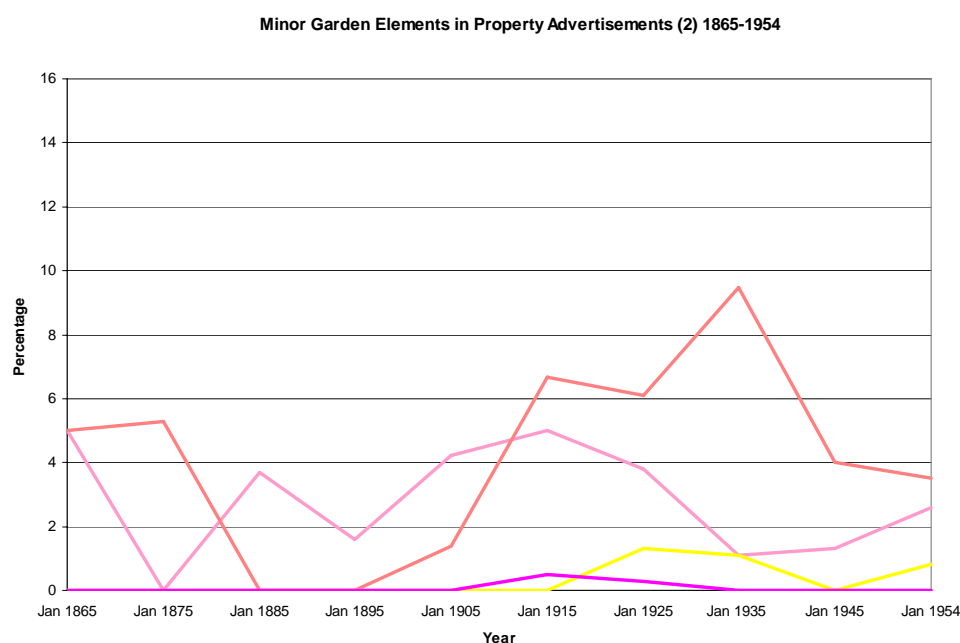


**Table 6: Percentage of Major Garden Elements in *Press* Property Advertisements, 1865-1954**

Tables 7 and 8 (below) show the trends of the ‘minor garden elements’ as proportions of total property advertisements over the period. These have been separated into two tables to enable them to be viewed more easily, but it is important not to consider them in isolation from each other. The most significant of these ‘minor garden elements’, shown in Table 7, is the relative importance of ‘other trees’ in 1865, at 15 per cent. alongside orchards and fruit. However, ‘other trees’ declined in importance to 1895, but climbed back to 6.3 per cent. by 1935. It should be clear here that the functions of these trees were very different in these two years: in the early period they acted as shelter while in the latter period they were considered purely ornamental. Also noteworthy is the ‘vegetables’ line in Table 7. Never featuring in more than five per cent of advertisements, they featured most in the decade from World War One, with a lesser period of importance during the 1880s and 1890s. Conversely, vegetables fell in importance from 1925, and thereafter remained at between one and two per cent. Vineries and glasshouses appeared inconsistently in the data sets between 1865 and 1905, but thereafter appeared in between one and just under three per cent of property advertisements.



**Table 7: Minor Garden Elements in *Press* Property Advertisements (1), 1865-1954**

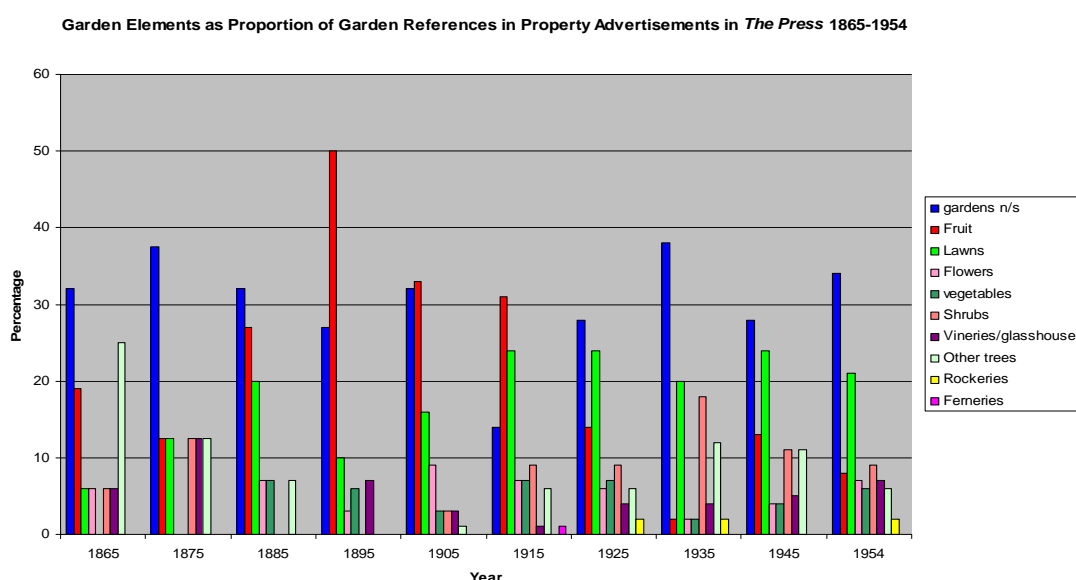


**Table 8: Minor Garden Elements in *Press* Property Advertisements (2), 1865-1954**

Table 8 shows the trends of ‘flowers’, ‘shrubs’, ‘rockeries’ and ‘ferneries’ as they appeared in the property advertisements of this period. The most dramatic alteration over time amongst these ‘minor garden elements’ was in the appearance of shrubs, which from 1915 became easily the most important. In 1935, a year in which vegetable gardens reached their nadir as a marketing tool, shrubs figured in slightly less than 9.5 per cent of property advertisements,

making them the most important of the ‘minor garden elements’ for that year. This further reinforces the analysis of ‘major garden elements’ above, where gardens for self-provisioning were replaced by decorative gardens following World War One, as even in the Depression shrubs were considered more desirable than vegetables. Flowers, apart from a severe dip in 1875, figured in between one and five per cent of advertisements but show no clear trend. Most intriguingly, ferneries registered very slightly in both 1915 and 1925, while rockeries appeared in 1925, 1935 and 1954, at between 0.8 and 1.3 per cent. Some ‘new’ garden fashions were therefore represented in these property advertisements, although not in anything like the numbers one would expect from reading the pages of the different gardening magazines or guides.

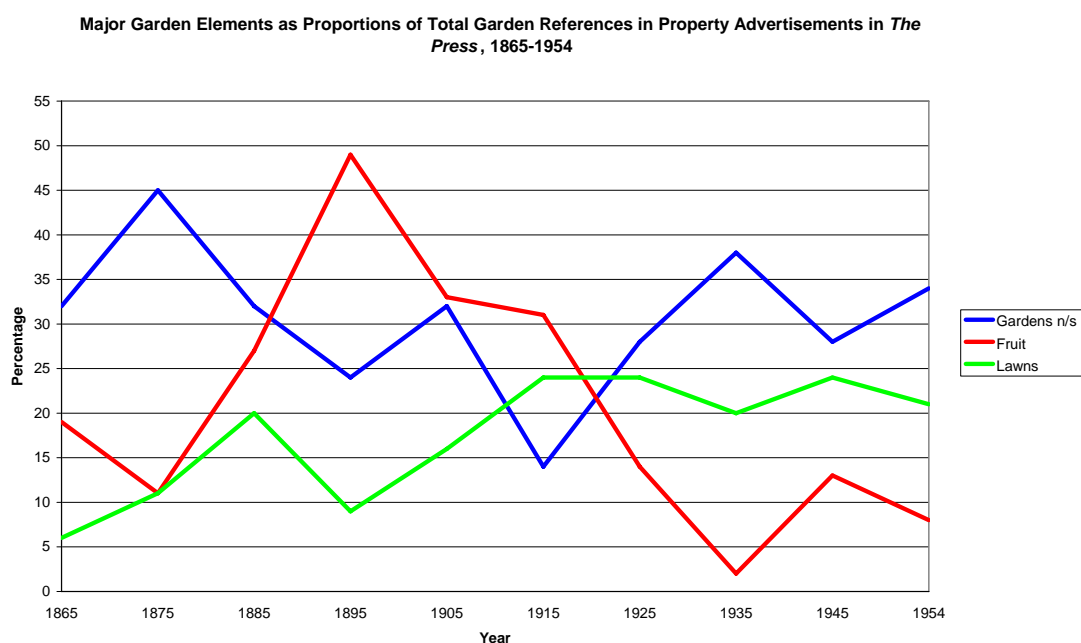
The trends shown here are accentuated when references to the different garden elements are shown as a proportion not of total property advertisements but of total references to gardens. By giving the data this treatment it is possible to avoid any concerns that the proportionality is grossly skewed. In years with fewer advertisements individual advertisements are likely to carry more information than in a year like 1954, for example, where advertisements frequently only had one or two lines in which to make their point. Thus, by excluding advertisements that do not refer to gardens, such variations in data quality can be avoided. Table 5 showed that gardens were not usually regarded as selling points. Table 9 (below) shows the relative importance of ‘garden elements’ in those residential Christchurch properties under six acres where gardens *were* featured.



**Table 9: Garden Elements as Proportions of Garden References in *Press* Property Advertisements, 1865-1954**

In Table 9, the blue line represents not total garden references, which in Table 5 was made up of mentions of gardens *and* of individual elements, but ‘gardens not specified’. This category is made up of references such as ‘beautiful garden’, ‘nicely laid out’, ‘gardens’, and so on. ‘Nice section’, a frequent descriptor, was not included as it did not specify that any effort had gone into developing the property. ‘Well laid out’ and ‘nicely laid out’, on the other hand, did suggest a garden of some sort had been initiated. Furthermore, where ‘garden’ or ‘nicely laid out’ was given, *and* a particular feature such as a lawn or fruit trees, only the garden feature was included in the total since they were taken to specify something about the garden and therefore would not fit in a ‘not specified’ category. Thus not every ‘beautiful garden’ was included in the ‘gardens n/s’ category. The ‘not specified’ category is therefore an ‘overspill’ category; the primary focus of Table 9 is on the garden elements themselves.

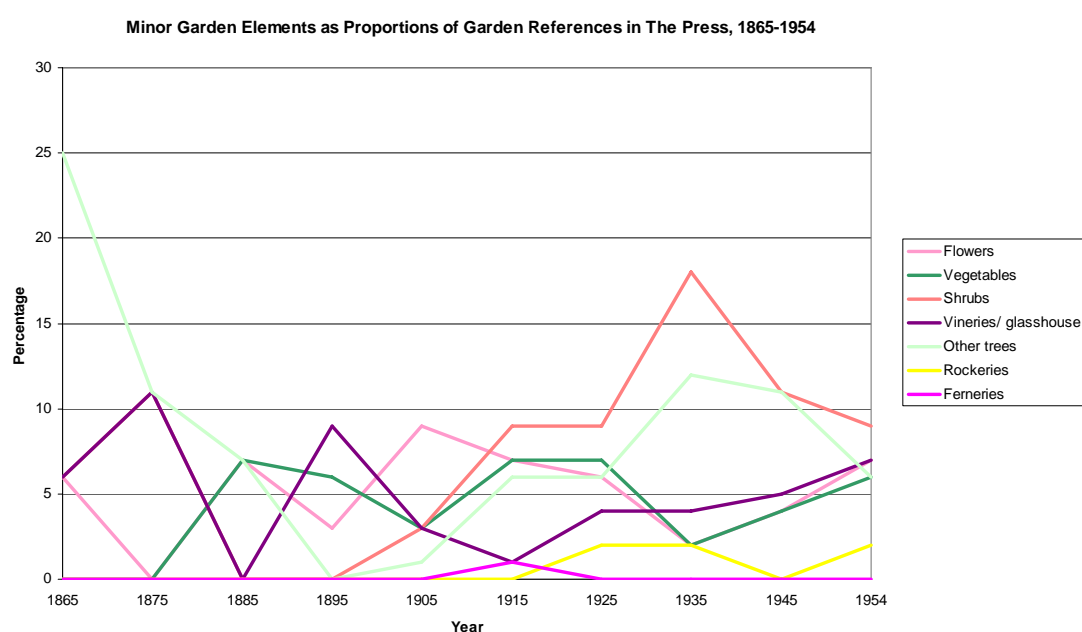
The representation of gardens in these advertisements changed very markedly from 1915, as could be seen from Tables 5 to 8, but shown with much greater relief in Table 9. Greater attention to ‘minor elements’, along with a very pronounced swing from orchards and fruit to lawns occurred at this time. Thus, in the midst of major war, detailed attention was given to the composition of gardens and increasingly on their decorative value. Again, a line graph showing trends more clearly (Table 10) emphasises this point.



**Table 10: Major Garden Elements as Proportions of Total Garden References in *Press* Property Advertisements, 1865-1954**

Furthermore, while ‘gardens’ as a simple, open-ended descriptor, was usually more often used by real estate agents than specific information, in the period 1895 to 1915 orchards and fruit were the most popular descriptors where gardens were specifically referred to. That is to say,

where gardens were mentioned, so were fruit trees, currants and berries. In this period, gardens were characterised mostly by their fruit contents. Buyers wanted information about what was *in* their potential gardens, not just that there was a garden. Secondly, fruit was thought to sell homes. This is quite different from the impression gleaned from records of horticultural exhibitions, for example, where in this period beautification was promoted, as shown in Chapter Three. The ‘abundance’ ethic seems to have been an active force, even if it was not officially endorsed by the horticultural establishment. Broadly speaking, the results of this data treatment are in line with the first treatment; lawns took precedence from 1925 and from 1915 to 1954 were consistently mentioned in between 20 per cent. and 24 per cent. of advertisements mentioning gardens. By way of contrast, between 1925 and 1954, fruit and orchards only achieved mentions in between two per cent and 14 per cent. of advertisements mentioning gardens.



**Table 11: Minor Garden Elements as Proportions of Garden References in the *Press*, 1865-1954**

Table 11 shows the ‘minor garden elements’ expressed as proportions of total garden references. It must be noted that ‘other trees’ in fact outranked ‘orchards and fruit’ in 1865, achieving references in 25 per cent. of these advertisements as opposed to 19 per cent. for fruit. Again, this reinforces the point that shelter was the prerequisite for garden growing in this early period. Of the minor elements, ‘other trees’ remained the most significant feature, equal with ‘vineries/glasshouses’ and ‘shrubs’ in 1875 (12.5 per cent.) and ‘vegetables’ and ‘flowers’ in 1885 (seven per cent). ‘Vineries/glasshouses’ ranked highest in 1895, on seven per cent, and ‘flowers’ ranked highest in 1905 on nine per cent. Thereafter, shrubs ranked highest until 1954, coming equal with ‘other trees’ again in 1945 (11 per cent.), but peaking

in 1935 on 18 per cent. Vegetables were mentioned, on average, in 4.2 per cent. of these advertisements, peaking in 1915 and 1925 on seven per cent. During the 'Dig for Victory' campaign they ranked at only four per cent, outdone by 'shrubs', 'vineries/glasshouses' and 'other trees'. In the three years in which rock gardens were mentioned, they achieved two per cent of the total advertisements in which gardens were mentioned, while ferneries, in 1915, were mentioned in only one per cent. of these advertisements.

In summary, this data contradicts assumptions previously made about Christchurch gardens of this period. Gardens were not usually regarded as significant selling points for residential properties. Where gardens were mentioned in these advertisements, emphasis was on their potential for self-provisioning between 1865 and 1915 rather than on aesthetic considerations. Thus, it is clear that home production of food was a primary concern for Christchurch residents from settlement until World War One. While references to gardens emphasised beauty from 1925, it is clear from Table 5 that on the whole gardens were treated almost as a liability from World War Two, quite a different conclusion from that expected. In a city promoted as a visual copy of the most picturesque elements of England, the most significant aspect of which was its gardens, one would expect gardens first to emphasise visual English garden elements and second to increase in importance throughout the supposedly recolonial period. This sampling of property advertisements demonstrates that on neither count was this the case.

Furthermore, while Christchurch's gardens are usually seen as a key marker of its Englishness, these declined as specifically mentioned desirable features in these advertisements from World War Two, when the emphasis shifted markedly towards interiors and the trappings of American, modern domesticity. Gardens, although clearly more decorative where mentioned, were not good selling points. In 1954, gardens were mentioned in only 27.1 per cent. of advertisements, compared with 48.7 per cent. in 1915.

### **Qualitative Analysis**

While this data shows particular trends in the way the property market viewed the role of gardens and garden features in selling homes, a richer impression of these gardens can be gained from a qualitative analysis of these advertisements. This allows for a better understanding of what kinds of plants were grown, an indication about how gardens were used and viewed, and to a limited extent offers some information about non-vegetative garden features.

References to 'gardens' across the period were reasonably diverse. In 1865, gardens could be 'well fenced and planted', 'half in garden', 'garden, with live fence', 'part in garden', 'well stocked and planted', 'very tastefully laid out', and 'in excellent order'. Here is certainly a sense that settlers were organising the landscape with edible gardens. All decorative elements were matched with economic elements, so that the single reference to flowers was in a garden with both fruit trees and a greenhouse, and the 'lawn for croquet' was in a garden with 'a variety of fruit trees'. One garden, deemed to be 'in excellent order, was 'fully stocked' with shrubs as well as with trees, unfortunately of unspecified variety. Another garden included 'forest trees', while one had been planted with trees. In 1875 advertisements were even more Spartan, with five simply stating 'garden'. One, on half an acre on Selwyn Street in Addington, was described as a 'pleasure garden', replete with 'choice trees', shrubs and a greenhouse. A 'croquet lawn' appeared at Selwyn Lodge, near to Hagley Park, but otherwise garden descriptions were non-existent. Gardens in this early period to 1875 seem, from the combined 39 advertisements in the two sample years, to highlight some 'trappings of civilisation'. Croquet lawns, a pleasure garden and tasteful designs all appeared, though in very small numbers. In 1865 attention was far more focused on the economic potential of gardens, expressed especially through the presence of shelter, fuel and fruit trees. In 1875 the smattering of garden elements were spread evenly, with much more weight given to the mere fact of a garden's existence.

In January 1885, slightly more description of gardens was offered. There were two 'nice' gardens, one 'splendid', one 'choice' and one 'beautiful'. There were also two tennis courts, one close to Papanui Road and one near Christ's College. Neither of the 'nice' gardens gave more information; nor did the 'choice' garden. The 'splendid' garden, a quarter-acre in St Albans, was 'filled with fruit' as well as the 'choicest flowers'. The 'beautiful' garden, three-eighths of an acre attached to a villa on Hereford Street, boasted 'old trees'. Three and a half acres on Riccarton Road had a 'splendid orchard in full bearing'. In 1895, most references to the existence of a garden were non-descript: 'garden', 'nicely laid out', 'good garden', and so on. However, there was one 'section in beautiful order'. Evoking a more productive approach, two gardens were under cultivation, one was 'capital land', one 'highly productive', and two were 'well stocked' (both with fruit); one of these was on 'rich land'. The beautifully ordered section gave no further details. Fruit received the greatest number of references; eight of the seventeen references here were to an orchard, with a further six mentioning fruit trees (one mentioned 'choice fruit trees in full bearing'). In addition, one property in Sumner boasted 'good strawberry gardens', one in the city had grape vines, while one in Linwood had an unspecified 'fruit garden', which may have meant currants.



1905 offered considerably more information, with a noticeable change in style. Most of the forty-five simple mentions of a garden said they were nice or well-laid out. Four were beautiful or beautifully laid out, four were tasteful, and two were pretty. One was 'ornamental', and another, a quarter acre in the city, was considered to be 'one of the most prolific gardens in the city', and drew specific attention to its lawns and flowerbeds. A half acre in Beckenham and a half acre in Papanui had tennis lawns. Nine of these gardens were fenced, an important development in garden maintenance. Nevertheless, while attention had been drawn to the beauty of gardens, it was still their economic side that remained most important. Again, the fruit category was almost entirely made up of orchards or fruit trees, with five fruit gardens. One property, in Southey Street (Sydenham), had profitable fruit trees with 'a lot of raspberry bushes, etc', while a quarter acre in Richmond was home to an incredible orchard of eighty trees. One property, in Vagues Road (Papanui) mentioned potatoes, and another in a suburban area mentioned tomatoes. While the language seemed to be emphasising beauty more, productiveness still received the greatest attention.

Tellingly, the 1915 data set placed much greater emphasis on naming garden plants. Again, most of the mentions of a garden received little description. However, those that did receive further information are of interest, and give clues towards developing trends. One garden in Bealey Avenue was 'small', 'easily kept'. A quarter acre in Riccarton was in 'first class garden'. Another quarter acre, in New Brighton, had a 'splendid garden and grounds', while 3/8 acre in Merivale was 'tastefully laid out in pleasure garden'. One acre off Papanui Road, nearby, was in pleasure garden as well. Still, most of these gardens had fruit. One acre in Sydenham had '100 fruit trees'. Aside from the plentiful mentions of orchards and fruit trees there were two fruit gardens, and one garden with 'plenty [of] small fruit'. One had apples, pears, plums, apricots and peaches, another mentioned apples and pears with a 'small fruit orchard', and another had 'apples, apricots, currants, gooseberries etc'. One garden had grapes. Three gardens specifically mentioned potatoes. Ornamental trees featured in five advertisements for 1915. There were two further mentions of shelter trees, one of 'well grown trees' and one 'well grown hedge'. Amidst the numerous lawn references were three tennis lawns, one a half acre in Fendalton, another on three quarters of an acre in Lower Riccarton, and the third on a half acre in Opawa. Two gardens mentioned bulbs, while another mentioned 'climbing roses, and a wealth of colour everywhere'. A twelve-room homestead in Sumner, on one and a half acres, had not only a motor shed but also a palm house. The attention to what plants were in the garden was far greater than in any of the previous sample years. However, the greatest level of detail in description was still given to fruit production.

In 1925 garden references were coupled with a variety of adjectives, singling them out as being important features. The 'garden is a feature... stocked with rare plants', one advertisement for a city garden claimed. In another, a Fendalton half acre with a stream frontage, the grounds were also 'a special feature'. A quarter acre 'just off' the illustrious Papanui Road, in Merivale, claimed that the 'garden is a perfect picture and beautifully kept'. Other gardens were 'tastefully laid out' (four gardens), 'beautiful' (four gardens), 'pretty', (three gardens) or 'beautifully laid out' (three gardens). Two each were 'charmingly laid out', 'a picture' or 'capital'. They might also be 'charming', 'splendid', 'most picturesque', 'artistically laid out', 'prettily laid out', 'extensive', 'excellent', 'lovely', 'perfectly laid out', 'beautifully planted', 'very attractive', 'choice'. One, in Merivale, claimed to be the 'best kept in [the] district'. Beauty had become a definite selling point.

As for fruit, the drop in references was matched by a drop in descriptors; no varieties were mentioned. Most were to fruit trees or orchards. A garden of one rood, 18.4 perches at 24 Valley Road, Cashmere, had an orchard with small fruits. One half acre in Opawa had a 'fruit garden'. Vegetable or kitchen gardens received slight mention, but two advertisements made reference to asparagus beds, one on twenty-five perches at Burwood and the other an unspecified quarter acre. Ornamental trees, on the other hand, were specifically mentioned nine times. The same half acre in Opawa with a fruit garden had a chestnut over fifty years old, with a variety of other (unspecified) trees; a quarter acre in Fendalton had 'large shady trees'. Amongst the increasing numbers of flower beds and gardens, three gardens specifically mentioned roses, one near St Andrews College (Merivale), another 'just off' Papanui Road and the third unspecified but with one hundred and twenty roses. Shrubs became 'choice', as in Wairarapa Terrace (Fendalton) and even on The Spur at Clifton, or 'choicest', again in Merivale. They could also be ornamental, as at 16 Fitzgerald Avenue in St Albans, or 'fancy' at 585 Hereford Street in Linwood. Of the four rock gardens (two on The Spur at Clifton, one in Cashmere and one near Bealey Avenue in the city), one (Clifton) was considered to be 'beautifully terraced'. There was an unmistakable turn, therefore, towards beauty in the advertisements for January 1925, with ornamental features given precedence over functional features. Ornamental and shady trees, roses and choice shrubs stand out, figuring predominantly in Merivale and Fendalton.

If anything, this trend is confirmed by the descriptors offered in 1935. Most gardens reverted to early stock phrases: 'well kept', 'nicely laid out', 'good'. However, three were beautiful, two were tasteful, and two were 'delightful'. Others were 'excellent', 'lovely', 'splendid', and one, in Cashmere, boasted of itself as 'one of the best gardens on the hills'. The only reference to fruit was a Riccarton garden at 44 Stafford Street that had both grapes and a

glasshouse. An Avonside garden, which contained the only vegetable garden, put emphasis on its grass tennis court and old trees. Ornamental trees featured in three other advertisements (one in Papanui, another in St Albans and one unspecified). Another, near St Andrew's College in Merivale, had 'good trees' as well as a rose garden. A half acre in Fendalton, fronting onto the Avon stream, had 'native shrub borders', one of the few references to native plants in all of the sample years. Again, descriptors emphasising beauty overwhelmed mentions of gardens' food producing potential.

In 1945, the general descriptors matched those of 1935. It is worth pointing out, in addition, that one garden, again near St Andrew's College, was described as being 'high' and 'terraced', a rare mention of a garden as being elevated. While 'high and dry' properties had been popularly noted in these advertisements in prior samples, in every case these referred to properties without homes on them, and never to gardens. High and dry was therefore a positive selling point usually used as a fall-back position in lieu of an actual garden, which was of greater significance. Another new descriptor was 'early garden', for a quarter acre at Redcliffs, on the hill and in the usually frost-free zone beside the sea. Three quarters of an acre near Papanui Road were in 'glorious garden', a garden in Linwood was 'attractively laid out', while thirty perches in Woolston were 'beautifully laid out'. Importantly, one garden at 36 Hawke Street in the seaside suburb of New Brighton, had 'twice won the "Victory Cup"'.

Of fruit, one garden 'by' Papanui Road had 'an orchard of assorted trees in full bearing'; another in 'Fendalton-Riccarton', at 48 Puriri Street, had a walnut and cherries. Otherwise, no further information was offered. Of two vegetable gardens, one, in Sydenham, was 'packed with vegetables'. Two gardens had old trees, one beautiful trees and one, a quarter acre in Merivale, had two weeping elms and rhododendrons, as well as azaleas. Another Merivale garden, of eighty-three perches, had a 'sheltered tennis court'. The Papanui Road garden, which was half an acre, had well kept lawns and 'flowers in profusion', as well as ornamental shrubs. Again, the emphasis was clearly on decorativeness. The number of suburbs appearing expanded to take in seaside homes, but it is important to note here that the only real reference to food production was attached to a cottage in Sydenham. Spatial differentiation between garden types and their relative saleability is clearly apparent across the city. Overall, despite falling numbers of garden references in total property advertisements, the descriptive emphasis, like the numerical emphasis, was on attractiveness.

In the 1954 sample, adjectives appended to gardens abounded. Sixteen gardens were beautiful or beautifully laid out, fifteen gardens were considered lovely, while five were 'excellent'. Two were 'magnificent': sixty-eight perches in Ilam Road (Riccarton) and another near St

Andrew's College. Other descriptors included artistic, 'delightful', 'faultless', 'attractive', 'charming', 'picturesque' and 'glorious'. One was 'restful and mature'. Some made a point of the smallness of the garden, one near St Andrew's College, one off Papanui Road, another – 'not too large' – close to Millbrook Reserve (Merivale) and a fourth – 'easily maintained' – also in Merivale. Another, in Bryndwr, was 'weedless'. One garden, at 72 Papanui Road, had a sunken garden and a brick garden. A number of gardens also had river outlooks or stream frontages, twelve in total. Of these, seven were in Fendalton, one in 'Fendalton-Riccarton', one in 'Riccarton-Fendalton', one in Riccarton, one close to Hagley Park (presumably Merivale) and the last one at 61 Hoon Hay Road in Spreydon-Halswell. Here there seems to have been a further evolution, from pure attractiveness to an emphasis on serenity coupled with beauty.

Mentions of fruit and vegetables were more full than in the previous two samples: the Spreydon-Halswell garden had a vine, a Riccarton garden had berries, and another had grapes. 305 Eastern Terrace (Beckenham) claimed to have 'fruit trees of every description', 2 Lindores Street (Addington) had strawberries, and 25 Matsons Road (Papanui) had a grapehouse, as did a Fendalton garden. Of vegetables, three asparagus beds appeared, one in the 'north-west', one in Riccarton and the other in the Matsons Road property. Potatoes were grown in a garden in Baretta Street (Somerfield), and tomatoes in the Eastern Terrace garden. A Spreydon property featured a 'well stocked kitchen garden', while a South Brighton garden was 'laid out in vegetables'. A St Albans garden boasted an 'excellent vegetable garden', and was situated in a 'prize winning' street. Production of food was still a possible selling point in 1954.

Once again, however, the emphasis was on beauty. Almost all of the references to trees emphasised themes of longevity, or serenity, so: 'mature' (Opawa and Papanui/Bryndwr), 'established' (North Avon Road), 'lovely old trees' (Papanui), 'settled' (Riccarton), 'grand' (Fendalton) and 'magnificent' (Riccarton). The Matsons Road property had both 'English and native trees'. A Scarborough garden was partly in native trees. One had 'sheltering trees'. Flower gardens yield fuller information as well. Roses appeared in five gardens, one, in Opawa, having standard roses and another, in Fendalton, with a separate rose garden. A Cashmere hills garden had terraced flower beds. Bulbs appeared in two advertisements, one of which was for the Eastern Terrace garden. Two three quarter acre sections in Fendalton had tennis lawns, while 'spacious lawns' appeared in the 29 perches of 905 Ferry Road (Woolston). Of shrubs, two were 'choice' ('just off' Papanui Road and St Albans), one 'ornamental' (Addington), one 'flowering' (St Albans) and one 'native' (Sumner). A 'beautiful rock garden' appeared in a Riccarton garden.

It is worth noting that native plants thus featured in three gardens, one in Papanui and two on or near the hills by the sea. Roses again were the most commonly featured flowers, although bulbs were also mentioned. Trees were accorded much more significance than previously, and a sense of age was evoked in conjunction with magnificence in making those gardens seem appealing. The trees finally, in 1954, gave authority to the most ‘gardenesque’ gardens of the Garden City, speaking far more loudly in the advertisements than any aspects of self-provisioning. Along with the gardened streams around Fendalton, the trees secured an image of successfully conquered landscape, where the conquest occurred at some point in the distant, *almost* unremembered past. A new landscape had been fully realised, capable, to borrow Homi Bhabha’s phrase, of denying ‘the chaos of [colonial] intervention’<sup>5</sup> by its very grandeur and apparent antiquity. The presence of native plants alongside roses and bulbs might well be taken as evidence of the hybridizing effect of colonial power<sup>6</sup> as represented through landscape. A more detailed analysis, offered in Chapters Seven to Nine, tempers such a reading, however. As has been hinted at throughout this section, different types of gardens appeared in different parts of the city; garden ‘zones’ appear in evidence. A spatial analysis of this evidence is thus required to give a full impression.

### **Spatial Analysis**

The original data collected from the property advertisements of the *Press* included fields for both the suburb and the street address or other identifying features (close to St Andrew’s College, for example). Most property listings included one or other of these, and sometimes both and, therefore most could be distributed according to suburb. Some gave no form of address, and in the following analysis have therefore been listed as ‘unidentified’. Others gave an address that was too vague, for example ‘Armagh St’, which could have been either in the central city, or in Linwood. These addresses were also included in the ‘unidentified’ category. Some vague addresses gave enough information to be assigned to a suburb. ‘Near St Andrew’s College’ is a good example, as there were many addresses claiming this distinction. In every case these were assigned to Merivale. Addresses appearing on Papanui Road without a specified suburb were also assigned to Merivale (there were only eight of these). Those addresses claiming to be ‘near’ Papanui Road, however, were assigned to St Albans if no other identifying features were given. There were a great many of these, and the ‘St Albans’ category is swollen as a result. Because of this, a breakdown of this category is offered. It must be noted that ‘close to Papanui Road’ might also indicate a Merivale address, but it was

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<sup>5</sup> Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London, 1994), p.111

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.112

assumed that as Merivale was the more prestigious suburb the addresses would usually either state 'Merivale' or 'close to St Andrew's College' if they could possibly get away with it. 'Close to Papanui Rd' was read as the next best thing. In several instances double-barrel suburbs were given, for example 'Fendalton-Papanui', 'Fendalton-Riccarton', 'Riccarton-Fendalton' or 'Spreydon-Halswell'. It is clear that these were to make the less salubrious suburb more attractive by including one that was more so in the address. However, the first half of the double-barrel was taken as the main signifier and the addresses were coded accordingly, unless a contradictory street address was also given. Further, no distinction was made in the analysis between suburbs recognised as having two 'halves' or parts. Upper and Lower Riccarton addresses, for example, were labeled simply as 'Riccarton'. Likewise, 'North Richmond' was included in 'Richmond', and North, South and New Brighton were all included in one category. In the latter instance, most of the addresses related to New Brighton only. The single Scarborough address was included in a 'Sumner/Scarborough' category, and addresses on Ferry Road or Ensors Road were allocated to a single Woolston/Phillipstown category, rather than relegating them to 'unidentified'. With only five such addresses overall such an allocation was considered useful and would not skew the results. Some assumptions were necessary, therefore, in allocating properties to suburbs, but the majority of advertisements gave specific information and were allocated accordingly.

Including the 'unidentified' category, mentions of garden features were distributed across thirty-two categories by suburb for each of the ten sample periods. The garden elements distributed excluded glasshouses where they did not specifically mention vines, and where they did mention vines these were included in the 'fruit' section. They also excluded 'unspecified' references to gardens, that is, properties that mentioned a garden but gave no further information about it. Thus, of a total 915 references to gardens and garden elements, the distribution of these elements by suburb took in 618 elements. These elements were given a different treatment from the first section of this chapter to allow some subtleties highlighted in the qualitative analysis to show more clearly. Where one property mentioned, for example, fruit trees and small fruit, this was treated in the current section as two references. Likewise, lawns and tennis lawns were treated separately, as were 'flowers' and 'roses'. In the quantitative section, by contrast, these were treated as a single reference. The purpose in separating references out in this way was to highlight spatial distributions of particular plant types in a way otherwise quite impossible, to see, for example, where asparagus beds were located, or where native plants appeared, or where roses seemed especially to matter. It is important to stress here that in most cases such splits in the original category did not occur. Thus, where a reference to 'asparagus' occurred, it was usually the only reference to 'vegetables'. In the quantitative analysis this would therefore have appeared as a single

reference to ‘vegetables’; in the spatial analysis it appears as a single reference to asparagus. Similarly, most references to ‘small fruits’ appeared unaccompanied by fruit trees. That is to say, the numbers represented in the following tables are broadly in line with the graphs in section one of this chapter, but they allow for more detail. These tables show which suburbs featured which garden elements and how these altered over time and, at the grossest level, they show which suburbs made most references to garden elements in the sample periods.

Subcategories used for treating garden elements were given based on the material presented in the advertisements; they were not pre-determined. ‘Fruit’ was broken down into references to ‘fruit’ in general, ‘fruit trees’, ‘orchards’, and ‘small fruit/vines’. ‘Trees’ was made up of ‘trees’ generally, ‘ornamental’, ‘native’ and ‘shelter’. ‘Lawns’ included ‘lawns’, ‘tennis lawns’ and ‘croquet lawns’. ‘Flowers’ included ‘flowers’, ‘flower gardens (and beds)’ as well as ‘roses/bulbs’. ‘Shrubs’ included ‘native shrubs’ as well as ‘shrubs’, and ‘vegetables’ included ‘vegetable (and kitchen) gardens’, ‘asparagus’ and ‘potatoes’. Ferneries and rockeries were not broken down further.

In 1865 and 1875, fruit only appeared in Linwood and Sydenham. In 1885, ‘fruit’ appeared in Fendalton, Linwood and St Albans gardens, with ‘orchards’ additionally in Richmond and St Albans. In 1895 fruit appeared most commonly in Linwood gardens, with Brighton, Papanui and Sumner gardens close behind. In 1905 Sydenham gardens had the most fruit, with two ‘fruit trees’ and three ‘orchards’, as well as small fruit and vines. Central and Linwood each had five references to fruit, Papanui four, St Albans and Spreydon three, and Fendalton, Opawa and Radley each had two. In 1915 Fendalton and Spreydon had the most fruit mentions with five each. Linwood had four; Merivale, Papanui and Richmond had three each. Sydenham and Addington had two. In 1925 St Albans, with four mentions of fruit trees, was ahead. Linwood and Merivale each had three references to fruit, with Cashmere, Central, Papanui, Riccarton and St Martins all on two. As mentioned earlier, in the 1935 sample there was only one reference to fruit: small fruit/vines in Riccarton. Numbers were still low ten years later, with Linwood and St Albans ahead on two, followed by Fendalton and Merivale with one mention of fruit trees each. In 1954 Beckenham and Spreydon both had the most references to fruit with three each, and Addington, Central and Riccarton with two each. Overall, twenty-nine of 180 references to fruit across the whole period could not be assigned a suburb. Twenty were in Linwood. Fifteen were in St Albans. Twelve were in both Papanui and Spreydon. Eleven were in Central, Fendalton and Sydenham.

Trees were distributed somewhat differently. They appeared in Central and Linwood (‘forest trees’) in 1865, in Addington in 1875 and again in Linwood in 1885. In 1895 they did not

appear at all, while in 1905 they appeared only in Burwood. In 1915 they received two references in Riccarton, and one each in Addington, Central, Fendalton, Papanui, St Albans, Spreydon and Sumner. Ten years later they were more prominent, with two references each in Cashmere, Fendalton, Linwood and Merivale. In 1935 Merivale gained two references to trees. They appeared in four suburbs in 1945: Fendalton, Merivale, Papanui and St Albans. Native trees appeared in 1954 in Papanui and Scarborough; most references that year centred on Papanui and Riccarton, with three each. Fendalton, Opawa, Richmond, St Albans and Spreydon each had one reference to trees. Of fifty-two references to trees across the period, six could not be assigned a suburb. The greatest number of tree references was for Papanui with six. Fendalton, Merivale and Riccarton and St Albans had five each. Linwood had four and Central three.

References to lawns changed considerably across the period. In 1865 and 1875 they received only one reference each, in both cases to croquet lawns. The first was unidentifiable; the second was in Spreydon. Two references to tennis lawns appeared in the 1885 sample, one in Central, the other in St Albans, with one lawn in Fendalton. Linwood and Papanui both mention lawns in 1895. Four lawns figured in Central Christchurch in 1905, three in St Albans and two each in Papanui and Spreydon. Tennis lawns were found in Beckenham and Papanui. In 1915 tennis lawns featured in Fendalton and Riccarton. The largest number of references to lawns that year, however, were for Spreydon gardens, with six. Fendalton, Merivale and St Albans had three each. The 1925 sample shows Fendalton with ten references to lawns. St Albans had eight, and Linwood seven. Central had five. One tennis court appeared, in Opawa. In 1935 three lawns registered in Merivale, and two in Fendalton. Again, there was one tennis lawn, this time in Avonside. In 1945 three lawns appeared in Linwood and two in Fendalton, with a tennis lawn in Merivale. In 1954 there were fifty-one references to lawns. Nine lawns showed in St Albans, and seven in Spreydon. Five were in Riccarton. Two tennis lawns showed up, both in Fendalton.

References to lawns figured in the property advertisements across the period more than any other garden element: 188 times. Twenty-five of these were for St Albans gardens, twenty-two for Fendalton gardens, and eighteen for Spreydon gardens. Fifteen lawn references appeared for Central, thirteen for Linwood and twelve each for Merivale and Papanui. Twenty-two were not identifiable. Of the eleven tennis lawns, three were in Fendalton. The great importance of lawns as a garden element, clearly noticeable from World War One, seems in Christchurch to have particularly mattered to the north-west suburbs.



Flowers were referred to across the period sixty-five times, always a minor garden element. They appeared once in 1865 and not at all in 1875. In 1885 they showed up only in St Albans, and in 1895 only in Central. In 1905 flowers and flower gardens were referred to in advertisements for properties in Central, Dallington, Fendalton, Merivale, Riccarton, St Albans and Spreydon. In the following sample period, they registered in Central, Merivale, Richmond, St Albans, Spreydon and Sumner/ Scarborough. References to roses or bulbs appeared in Central, Merivale and Sumner/ Scarborough. In 1925 Merivale had the most references to flowers, with six, including two for roses and bulbs. Fendalton had two references. Others were Central, Riccarton, St Albans and Spreydon. Only one reference was made to flowers in the 1935 sample: to a Merivale garden with roses. In 1945 the single reference was for St Albans. 1954 gave a much stronger showing for flowers, with two references each in Addington, Opawa, Papanui, St Albans, Spreydon, Sumner/ Scarborough and Sydenham. Roses or bulbs appeared in Addington, Beckenham, Fendalton, Opawa, Papanui and Spreydon. Over the entire period, most references to flowers were for homes in Merivale and St Albans, with nine each. Five were for Spreydon, and four each for Central, Fendalton and Sumner/ Scarborough. Three were for Riccarton. It is worth noting that Linwood, figuring prominently in other categories examined thus far, received no references to flowers in the entire period. There were twelve references to roses or bulbs, four of which were for Merivale gardens.

Shrubs were more commonly reported, but were barely referred to before 1915. In 1865 shrubs appeared in Central, in 1875 in Addington, and in 1905 again in Central. No mentions of shrubs were made in the intervening samples. In 1915 three references to shrubs were made for St Albans, with two each for Merivale and Spreydon. In 1925 they appeared three times each in Cashmere, Fendalton and Linwood, and twice each in Central and Merivale. In 1935 shrubs were mentioned in three advertisements for Merivale homes, and once each for Avonside, Cashmere, Fendalton, Papanui and St Albans. The Fendalton reference was for native shrubs. In 1945 three references were for St Albans, two for Merivale and one for Papanui. The 1954 sample yielded a somewhat varied picture. Four shrub references were made for Riccarton, three for St Albans, and two each for Papanui, Spreydon and Sumner/ Scarborough. Over the whole period, St Albans was referred to most frequently, with eleven mentions of shrubs. Ten were in Merivale, six in Fendalton, and five each in Cashmere, Papanui and Spreydon.

Vegetables did not appear until 1885, with one reference for Fendalton. In 1895 a single reference occurs for Central. In 1905 two references appear for Papanui, one of these being to potatoes. In 1915 there were two references each in Fendalton and Spreydon, both of the latter

being for potatoes. Single references appeared in Addington and St Albans, both for potatoes, and another in Papanui for vegetables. In 1925 four references to vegetables were made for Merivale gardens, and two for Central. Asparagus appeared in two gardens, one unidentified and one in Burwood. A single reference to vegetables was made in 1935, despite the vegetable growing scheme, for an Avonside garden. Single references appeared for vegetables in 1945, for Linwood and Sydenham. In 1954, two references each appeared in Papanui, St Albans and Spreydon. Asparagus was mentioned in Papanui and Riccarton; potatoes in Somerfield. Across the entire period, references to vegetables appeared most in Papanui (five advertisements), Merivale and Spreydon (four advertisements), and Avonside, Central, Fendalton and St Albans (three).

Finally, ferneries were mentioned in only two advertisements in the whole period, Linwood in 1915 and Opawa in 1925. Rockeries were mentioned ten times (including one reference to a rock edge), four in 1925, once in 1935 and five times in 1954. In 1925 two were in Clifton, one in Central and one in Cashmere. The 1935 mention was in Papanui. In 1954 they were mentioned in advertisements for gardens in Cashmere, Clifton, New Brighton, Riccarton and Sumner. Six, therefore, were on the hills, one by the sea and the remaining two in Papanui and Riccarton, the former bush pockets.

The overall results of this spatial analysis are expressed in Table 12 below. In gross terms, the suburb with the most references to gardens across the period was St Albans, with sixty-eight. The second most references to garden elements were for Fendalton gardens (fifty-one), followed by Merivale (forty-eight), Spreydon (forty-six), Papanui (forty-three), Linwood (forty-two), Central (forty-one), Riccarton (thirty-eight), Cashmere (nineteen), and Opawa, Sumner/ Scarborough and Spreydon each with fifteen. It is important to note that of the sixty-eight elements coded as St Albans, twenty gave as their location 'near', 'just off' or 'close to' Papanui Road. It is possible that some or all of these in fact were closer to Merivale than St Albans, in which case the rankings of these two suburbs would be swapped exactly, with Merivale receiving the most mentions of garden elements and St Albans the third most mentions. If those addresses near Papanui Road had been coded as 'unidentified', both St Albans and Merivale would have come second after Fendalton, although the significance of Papanui Road as a location would have been lost. It should also be pointed out that if a separate category had been assigned for those addresses describing themselves only as being near to this road, that category would have come ahead of Cashmere, Opawa, Sumner and Spreydon, a point which underscores the importance of gardens as marketing devices for that north-west part of the city.

**Table 12: Garden Elements Distributed by Suburb as recorded in the *Press* Property Advertisements, 1865-1954**

Table 13 (below) shows the numbers of references to the six most significant garden elements ranked by suburb across the ten sample periods. This gives a clear indication that, although more than thirty different suburbs were marketed as featuring an array of garden features, nevertheless certain suburbs, and especially certain collections of suburbs – ‘zones’ seems to be the right word – predominate. Above all, a band from Riccarton to St Albans, taking in Fendalton, Papanui and Merivale, accounts for most of these. Smaller pockets, in Central, in Linwood, Avonside and Richmond, in Sydenham and Spreydon, in Cashmere and in Sumner are also in evidence. Apart from a few oddities – Sydenham in the fruit column, Sumner in the flowers column, Cashmere in the shrubs column and Avonside in the vegetables column – the suburbs referred to in Table 12 appear evenly spread across the six columns. From this it can be inferred that within particular ‘zones’ a degree of homogenization in garden layouts may be observed. When this is compared with the map of horticultural versatility of soils (Figure 2), it will be seen that these particular suburbs are almost all on the best of Christchurch soils, emphasizing the relationship between gardening and environment.

However, this analysis has also alluded to some differences in garden types across the city. The advertisements, it may accurately be stated, lend emphasis to relationships between tennis lawns and Fendalton, roses and Merivale, rock gardens and the hills, native plants and Fendalton, the ‘bush’ suburbs of Riccarton and Papanui, and the hills. Linwood features strongly in fruit, but not at all in flowers, and is well down the list in shrubs and vegetables (indeed in Table 13 Linwood appears in neither of those categories). What, if anything, is to be made of these relationships or lack thereof? Are they merely statistical anomalies or are they in fact statistically insignificant? It would certainly be easy to dismiss these apparent correlations if they had not already appeared in Chapters Two to Five of this thesis. But the reappearance of a relationship between specific garden features and specific suburban areas, even within what seems on the surface to be an apparent homogenization of garden styles, demands closer attention.

FRUIT		TREES		LAWNS		FLOWERS		SHRUBS		VEG	
Linwood	20	Papanui	6	St Albans	25	Merivale	9	St Albans	11	Papanui	5
St Albans	15	St Albans	5	Fendalton	22	St Albans	5	Merivale	10	Merivale	4
Papanui	12	Fendalton	5	Spreydon	18	Spreydon	4	Fendalton	6	Spreydon	4
Spreydon	12	Merivale	5	Central	15	Central	4	Cashmere	5	Avonside	3
Central	11	Riccarton	5	Linwood	13	Fendalton	4	Papanui	5	Central	3
Fendalton	11	Linwood	4	Merivale	12	Sumner	3	Spreydon	5	Fendalton	3
Sydenham	11	Central	3	Papanui	12	Riccarton	3			St Albans	3

**Table 13: Number of references to six most important garden elements ranked by suburb, 1865-1954**

At this stage it may be observed that certain garden fashions made no appearance in the samples. There were no Japanese gardens. There were no water features other than streams. There were no 'rustic' bridges. There were no alpine gardens, although rock gardens are in evidence. This analysis of over 1800 property advertisements has demonstrated the changing values associated with Christchurch gardens from 1865 to 1954. The major turning point, when emphasis moved from subsistence to beauty, I argue, occurred from the period of World War One. This is a different reading from that offered by garden historians to date, and demonstrates the limitations of relying too heavily on primary sources that highlight 'fashions' in garden design. These textualised 'fashions' did make appearances in Christchurch gardens, but they never defined them. On this point, therefore, my analysis concurs with Hammeter's. I have, furthermore, continued to allude to the possibility that particular garden styles preponderated in particular suburbs, a possibility given considerably more weight in the current chapter with its capture of a large sample of gardens. Case studies of these suggested garden zones are now examined.

## 7

# Riccarton

## Introduction

No suburb in Christchurch has been as attractive to local historians as Riccarton, about which a number of academic and non-academic works exist. This is due entirely to two peculiar facts, which indeed are closely intertwined. The first of these is that at the time of European settlement of Riccarton in the early 1840s, the area – then known as Putaringamotu – sported one of two patches of remnant bush easily discernable from the Port Hills. Riccarton Bush has rightly attracted the attention of ecologists, especially as the other patch of forest seen by the early European settlers, Papanui, was quickly felled.<sup>1</sup>

The second reason Riccarton has attracted so much attention is that in the history of English, Anglican Christchurch, Riccarton is an oddity and presented an early complication to the Canterbury Association's plans. The story of the Deans brothers' settlement, with the Gebbies and the Mansons – and earlier of the failed Heriot and McGillivray enterprise – has been more than fully rehearsed elsewhere, not least by the Deans' own ancestors who have managed to establish out of the original fiefdom something of a publicly recognised dynasty.<sup>2</sup> The Scottishness of 'Riccarton', and of the Avon River, both of which the brothers named after their home in Scotland, and their Presbyterianism, have always muddled the clean sweep of English Christchurch's imposition. Christchurch, or at least Riccarton, was Scottish before it was English, and the Deans' apparently amicable relationship with Ngai Tuahuriri, from whom they leased Putaringamotu, creates another unique layer that must be acknowledged. Added to this is the undeniable fact that it was the success of Scottish Riccarton that guaranteed the future location of Christchurch, and in times of doubt from 1850, visits to Riccarton by Association settlers provided a ray of hope, a glimmer of possible prosperity in

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<sup>1</sup> See Charles Chilton, *Riccarton Bush: A Remnant Kahikatea Forest Formerly Existing in the Neighbourhood of Christchurch, New Zealand* (Christchurch, 1924); Chilton, *Riccarton Bush Reserve* (Christchurch, 1950); Leonard Cockayne, 'The Vegetation and Flora of the Canterbury Plains', in R. Speight, A. Wall, M. Laing (eds), *Natural History of Canterbury* (Christchurch, 1927); Brian Molloy (ed.), *Riccarton Bush: Putaringamotu, Natural History and Management* (Christchurch, 1995)

<sup>2</sup> John Deans, *Pioneers on Port Cooper Plains: The Deans Family of Riccarton and Homebush* (Christchurch, 1964); Deans (ed.), *Pioneers of Canterbury: Deans Family Letters, 1840-1854* (Christchurch, 1997); Ian McBride, *Riccarton: The Founding Borough* (Christchurch, 1994); Sarah Penney, *Beyond the City: The Land and its People* (Christchurch, 1977); Gordon Ogilvie, *Pioneers of the Plains: The Deans of Canterbury* (Christchurch, 1996)

what were very bleak times indeed. The most critical point to note, however, is that what sustained the Deans enterprise was the presence of the bush, and of the river. It was the same for Ngai Tuahuriri. Shelter, fuel, water: sustenance.<sup>3</sup> The kahikatea forest drew human habitation to it; topography, as explored in Chapter Two, matters to history.

It is important, therefore, to start with Riccarton. Yet despite all that has been written about the suburb and its bush, very little has been written about its gardens. Ian McBride's *Riccarton: The Founding Borough*, is a case in point. Full of anecdotal evidence gleaned from numerous interviews, gardens are only rarely commented on and never in detail. Interviewees recounted early problems associated with the stockyards; cattle were known to invade poorly fenced gardens.<sup>4</sup> Some gardens in the area, notably near Mandeville Street, where the Rhodes brothers lived, could be very beautiful, a point noted as early as 1922.<sup>5</sup> The gardens of Wood's (later Fleming's) Flour Mill near Hagley Park, and of the Railway Station, were prize winners.<sup>6</sup> Most gardens seemed to be watered using rams, devices for pumping artesian water into tanks.<sup>7</sup> There were nurseries in the area, on Clarence Street and Deans Avenue (from 1967).<sup>8</sup> Wharenuī School seemed to encourage gardening, with an ornamental garden and macrocarpa hedge from 1907, and children's vegetable plots during World War One.<sup>9</sup> But apart from these mentions, as well as orchards and Chinese market gardens,<sup>10</sup> no description of gardens is offered anywhere in this book.

This chapter aims to fill that gap, and to continue developing the theme that amongst assumed homogenisation, particular gardening characteristics did attach themselves to particular areas of Christchurch. Riccarton, in this sense, is a difficult label for the area under investigation (Appendix 4.ii). It developed from the Deans' Riccarton estate outwards, but, as McBride notes, from 1913 the Deans residence and grounds, as well as Riccarton Bush, sat outside the newly constituted Riccarton Borough.<sup>11</sup> Deepest Riccarton, therefore, was actually in Waimairi County Council, making it part of Fendalton. This chapter examines gardens of the Deans estate, and also gardens of the Riccarton Borough area. Chapter Two explored the nature of the garden the Deans brothers established at Putaringamotu, drawing on their letters home. Their primary interest was in establishing fruit trees, and it was noted that their produce was exhibited in the earliest Horticultural Society competition.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Ian McBride, p.4

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp.51, 114

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp.38, 64, 108

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 36, 141

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.108

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 34, 115

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp.128, 108

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 27, 116

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 50-51

## The Riccarton Estate

After the premature deaths of William and John Deans, Jane, newly married and fresh to Putaringamotu from Ayrshire, dug her heels in and continued to manage the estate until her son John Deans II (no other Christchurch family has developed such affectation) came of age in 1874. Her tree planting has been celebrated by her ancestors. She came from Auchenflower,

which means “field of flowers”, set in beautiful countryside noted for its fine trees... From her father, who was responsible for most of the planting in the district, she inherited her life-long love of trees, especially those associated with her youth – the oak, ash, elm, geans and scotch fir... The magnificent trees surrounding Riccarton House were planted by Jane, who had a passion for trees, especially those of her native Scotland.<sup>12</sup>

As noted in Chapter Two, the existence today of the remnant kahikatea stand owes much to the love of trees felt by both John and Jane; Richard Grove’s claim, supported by John MacKenzie, that within the British Empire Scots tended to play an important part in conservation<sup>13</sup> seems in Riccarton to be well borne out. Not that the entire twenty two hectares of forest was retained; more than half of it was felled by agreement with the Canterbury Association by 1851.<sup>14</sup>

Subdivision of the estate, Rural Section 163, began in the 1890s. A plan of an early subdivision from this period shows blocks of between one and five acres carved out between Straven Road, the Northern Railway line, bounded to the north by Waimairi Stream and to the south by Riccarton Road. Another area, west of the Bush, was bounded by Clyde Road, the Avon River, Tarata and Puriri Streets and Riccarton Road. Blocks here were mostly just over two acres, but one was slightly more than four acres.<sup>15</sup> Further subdivision in this western

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<sup>12</sup> *The Deans Family: 1840-1990* (Christchurch, 1990), pp. 1, 9

<sup>13</sup> Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1860* (Cambridge, 1995), pp.312,384; Richard Grove, ‘Scotland in South Africa: John Croumbie Brown and the Roots of Settler Environmentalism’, in Griffiths and Robins, pp.139-166; John MacKenzie ‘Apocalypse, Neo-Whiggism and New Perspectives’, in *Empires of Nature and the Nature of Empires* (East Linton, 1997), p.18; MacKenzie, ‘The Imperial Sceptic’, in *Empires of Nature*, pp.61-85; MacKenzie, ‘Missionaries and Medics, Botanists and Foresters: The Scots and the Imperial Environment’ (NZHA, Otago University, 2003); Diarmid Finnegan, ‘Natural History Societies in Victorian Scotland: The Pursuit of Local Civic Science’ (ICHG, Auckland University, 2003)

<sup>14</sup> Eric Pawson, ‘Confronting Nature’, in John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall (eds), *Southern Capital: Towards a City Biography* (Christchurch, 2000), p.72

<sup>15</sup> *The Deans Family*, p.46



block took place in 1907 and 1908.<sup>16</sup> The 1907 plan shows a massive reduction in property sizes; mostly to half acre and three quarter acre sections. From 1911 the previously unsubdivided area around Riccarton Bush began to be developed, and here properties were to be even smaller. In the area bounded by Riccarton Road, the Bush, Rata Street and Straven Road properties ranged between 36 perches and one rood 35 perches. Two properties, stretching between Riccarton Road and the Bush, were more than two roods, though this was purely due to the impossibility at that stage of further subdivision because of access issues (Figure 26).<sup>17</sup>

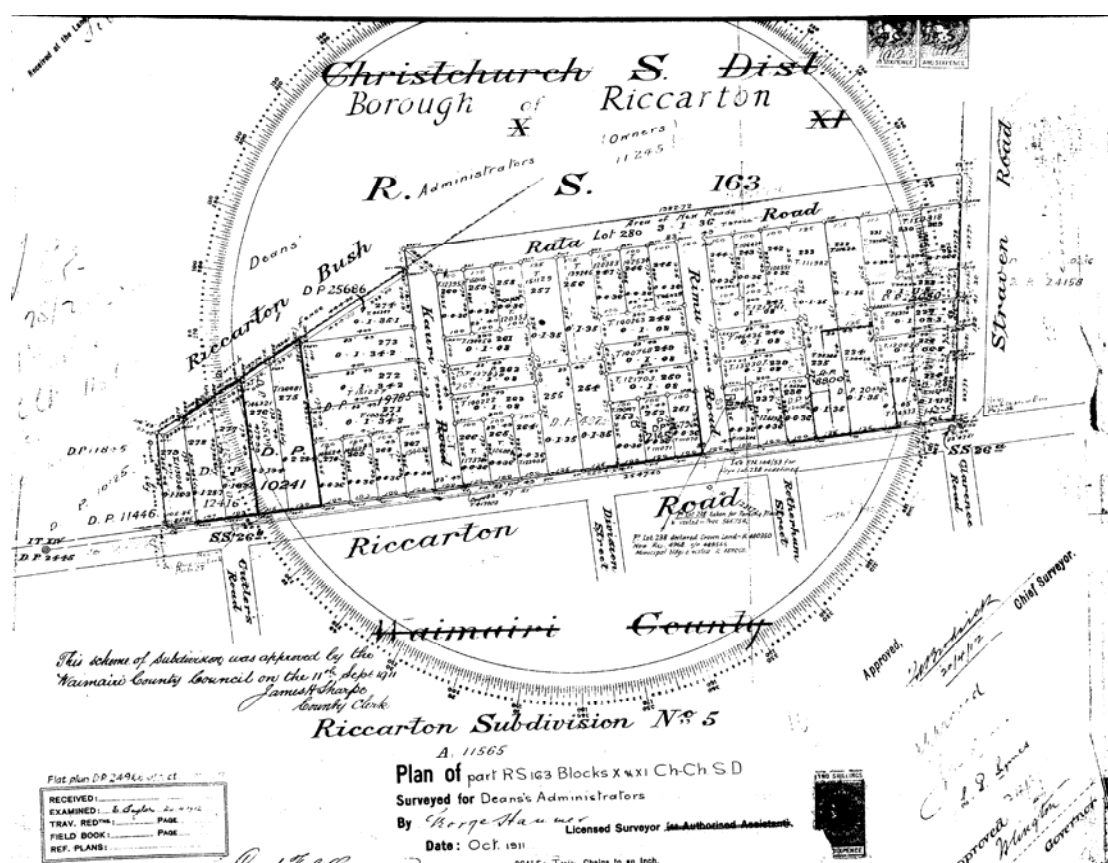


Figure 26: DP 3360, 1911 Subdivision of RS 163, 1911  
Source: LINZ

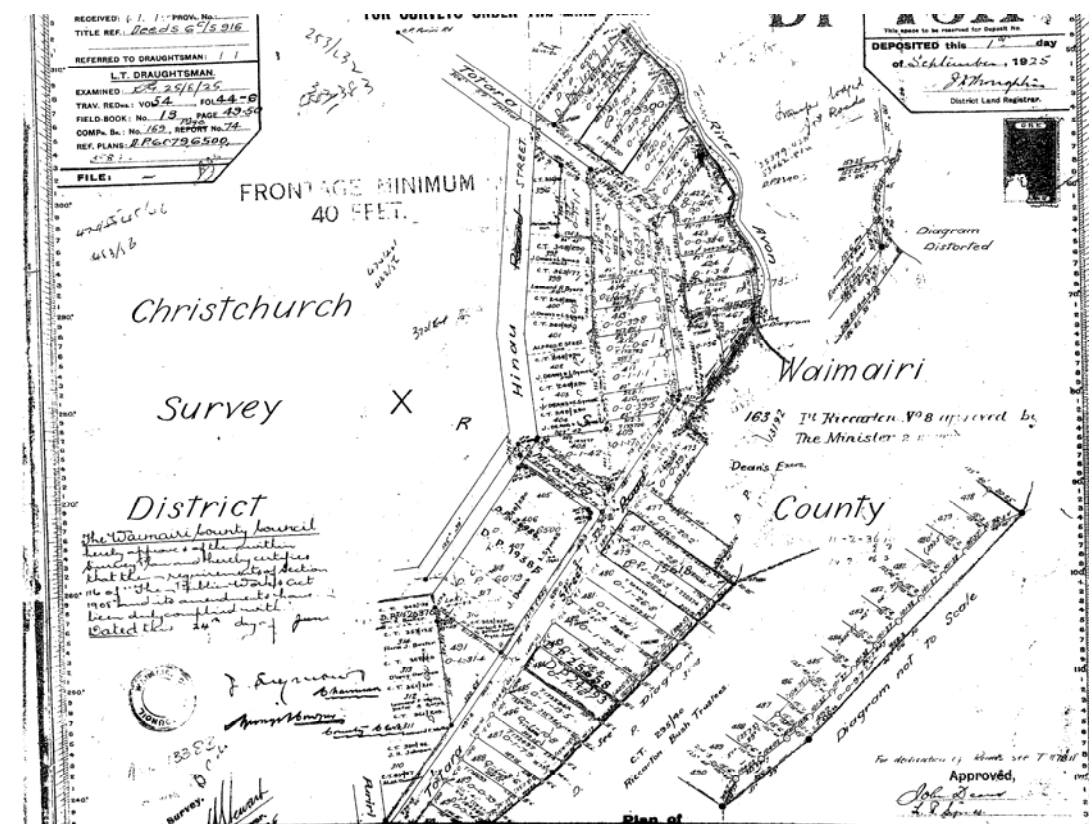
A plan for subdivision of the east side of Puriri Street, up to Weka Street was lodged in 1921. These properties were all slightly more than one rood, with the exception of one property (Lot 321), bounded by the Avon River, which was slightly more than half an acre.<sup>18</sup> A description of this property is given later in this section. The same plan shows a proposed Totara Street, and further subdivision of the Deans estate to the east of the 1921 subdivision, between Hinau Street, the river and the Bush, including the new Totara Street took place in 1925. Again, the

<sup>16</sup> DP 2445, Subdivision of RS 163, 1907; DP 2681, Subdivision of RS 163, 1908, LINZ

<sup>17</sup> DP 3360, Subdivision of RS 163, 1911, LINZ

<sup>18</sup> DP 6079, Subdivision of RS 163, 1921, LINZ

properties were between 37 perches and one rood 28 perches, the largest properties backing onto the Bush where lack of access precluded smaller sections (Figure 27).<sup>19</sup> By the following year, with further subdivision on the other side of the Bush between Kahu Road, Rata Street and Straven Road, the Bush was almost completely hemmed in with proposed developments. The 1926 subdivision featured sections mostly of 34 to 39 perches, with a lesser number of just over one rood.<sup>20</sup> The 1927 subdivision immediately north of Kahu Road, between the Avon River, Weka Street and Tui Street featured properties of very similar size.<sup>21</sup> The area became characterised by Californian bungalows and the street names reflected original ecological associations.



**Figure 27: DP 7511, 1925 Subdivision of RS 163, 1925**  
**Source: LINZ**

While smaller developments in the area took place in the 1930s, it was not until 1938 that major subdivision again took place. The block west of the 1926 subdivision, through to the Bush, featured sections of 28, 30 and 31 perches.<sup>22</sup> In 1940, 30 perch sections were set out along Riccarton Road south of the Bush, in previously undeveloped land (Figure 28).<sup>23</sup> In the

<sup>19</sup> DP 7511, Subdivision of RS 163, 1925, *LINZ*

<sup>20</sup> DP 7942, Subdivision of RS 163, 1926, *LINZ*

<sup>21</sup> DP 8340, Subdivision of RS 163, 1927, *LINZ*

<sup>22</sup> DP 11261, Subdivision of RS 163, 1938, *LINZ*

<sup>23</sup> DP 11845, Subdivision of RS 163, 1940, *LINZ*

same year, sections between 30 perches and one rood eight perches were set out in a loop between the Avon River and Kahu Road, the larger properties backing onto the waterfront immediately opposite the Bush.<sup>24</sup> The final block backing onto the Bush, in the north west corner between the River, Totara Street and the Bush was subdivided in 1946. Here, properties ranged between 26 perches and slightly more than a quarter acre.<sup>25</sup> No further major subdivisions took place in the period under review. Most of the subdivision of the Deans' estate closest to the Bush took place in the 1920s, but the pattern of approximately quarter acre sections had been established a decade earlier, and continued through into the 1940s.

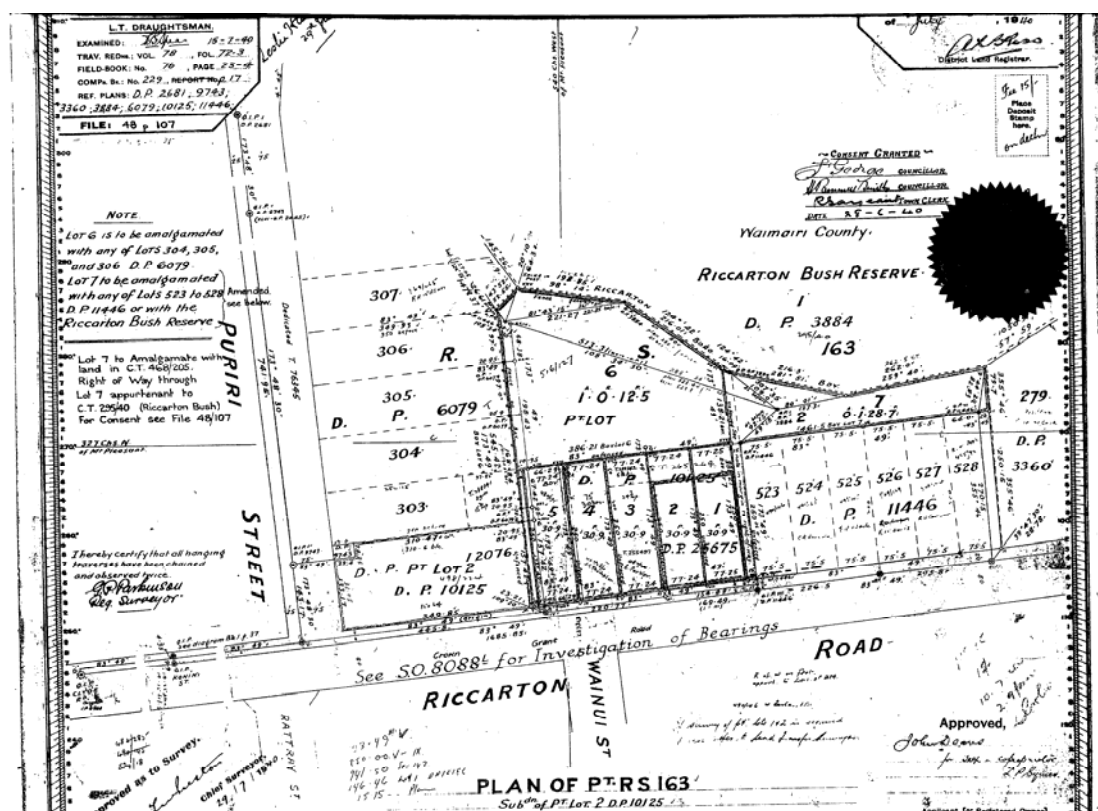


Figure 28: DP 11845, 1940 Subdivision of RS 163, 1940  
Source: LINZ

McBride noted that in 1890 the north side of Riccarton Road was pasture land, apart from the Deans homestead and farm buildings, Hugh Hepburn's home in Clyde Road and a brick house built by the Deans family for their employee, Andrew Wilson.<sup>26</sup> His home was on the corner of Riccarton Road and what became Puriri Street. The family's own commemoration stated that it was believed the gardener was Charlie Wilson.<sup>27</sup> While the rural nature of the

<sup>24</sup> DP 11977, Subdivision of RS 163, 1940, LINZ

<sup>25</sup> DP 13522, Subdivision of RS 163, 1946, LINZ

<sup>26</sup> Ian McBride, p.37

<sup>27</sup> *The Deans Family*, p.33

area had begun to change with the subdivisions mentioned, certain continuities remained. The property next door to Wilson's was bought by Audrey Potter's grandfather in 1922 for his daughter as a twenty-first birthday present.<sup>28</sup> Audrey was born there in 1933 and, as a long-term resident of the area, remembered her neighbour, James Wilson, living in the same house on the corner of Puriri Street.

[T]he neighbour on the other side, where the substation was, he had been a gardener for the Deans family. And that..., we were told, had been a lodge for an entrance into Riccarton House, off Riccarton Road... Because it was right on the corner... He was always called Jimmy Wilson. And I believe his father had been a gardener for the Deans family, too. He lived there... next door to us, with his sister. She was Elizabeth. She never married.<sup>29</sup>

He retained a strong interest in the Bush, so that:

... he was interested in the native plants. In fact he took me over... through the fence [to] Deans Bush... he was only interested because I was interested in plants, he was showing me all the native plants. He'd show me the names of them, and tell me what they were, and what they were used for.<sup>30</sup>

His garden had a hawthorn hedge, which separated their two properties, which he used to trim for Audrey's mother. His garden had a culinary use as well: 'Mum always wanted mint for the mint sauce... on Sunday lunch, Sunday roast. But it was one thing it took her many years to finally get some to root... And they had a good supply, so often I would be sent in... to go and get some mint.' Wilson's garden featured Sweet William, a camellia which one could 'just about climb inside' due to its 'formal' pruning, and pampas grass, gunnera, and 'a lot of those more unusual plants.'<sup>31</sup> Wilson's garden was a classic 'Victorian' garden, crammed with oddities gathered from throughout the Empire.

Residents around the Bush, according to Audrey, frequently had gates into it, and it was used for recreation. However, remnants of the Deans property were retained outside the Bush itself, and provided other opportunities for recreation. '[W]e had one of the trees, it was an ash tree, in fact I believe there were two there... But, the other one, my second brother nailed timber across to make steps, and built a play house up in the branch, in the fork there. We used to climb up there.'<sup>32</sup> Jane Deans' ash, while having this new use, also established continuities with the past. The same was true at the other extent of the Deans property. An

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<sup>28</sup> Audrey Potter to Matt Morris, pers. comm. 11 October 2005

<sup>29</sup> Audrey Potter, interviewed 24 August 2005

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

oak tree on the banks of the Waimairi Stream in Weka Street planted by Jane Deans is still extant.<sup>33</sup>



**Figure 29: 2 Puriri Street in 1929, showing Jane Deans' ash and other tall trees**  
**Source: Audrey Potter Private Collection**

Audrey's mother's garden was, for the period covered by this thesis, at 2 Puriri Street (later renumbered as 6). Primarily, it was, according to Audrey, a productive garden. The property was about half an acre, and a 'good part of it was put down in orchard'. In it were four plums, a Lord Wolsey apple, as well as Granny Smiths, Cox's Orange, Sturmer and 'the Delicious, which was nearly always a red one in those days'. They also had 'a huge very round very dark red, almost black apple, that I don't know the name of...'<sup>34</sup> In addition were two walnuts and two pears, one of which was a William bon Cretien, a nectarine and a peach, which was very white-fleshed. Most of these trees were in the bottom part of the garden. The overwhelming presence of fruit in this 1930s garden is striking but, as will be seen, not unique. The vegetable garden was also prolific. 'We had a lot of it in potatoes. Always had two crops, the early ones and the main ones... I remember growing Arran Banner'.

[T]hen there were also peas, several crops, you know, grown in succession, the early ones were always W. F. Massey, and then, Greenfeast was the ones she [mother] liked later. And then of course things like carrots and parsnips, cabbages, silverbeet, pumpkins. She liked to have a try of new ones occasionally. I remember her growing

<sup>33</sup> Anne de Lambert, interviewed 13 October 2005

<sup>34</sup> The same apple is referred to by George Gordon's grandson in his recollection of George's Holly Road garden: 'I well remember the large red, almost black, "Black Prince" apple'. New Zealand Federation of University Women, Canterbury Branch, *St Albans: From Swamp to Suburbs, An Informal History* (Christchurch, 1989), p.159

Chinese cabbage, before you ever saw it in the shops. I think Wong Bok was the only variety available then. And salsify. She tried that one time. I don't think we liked it very much, because I think she only tried it the once. It looks like a white carrot, a root crop. And scarlet runner beans. They were grown on a netting fence strung across the garden, so you could pick on both sides. But she tried to grow as many vegetables as she could. One thing we didn't grow at that time, although we grew it later from perhaps the late 1950s, mid to late 1950s, was sweet corn... When she grew pumpkins they were those very hard skinned ones. We didn't... see much of the little... butternut ones that you see now. It was all Whangaparoa Crown.<sup>35</sup>

Tradition, as well as necessity, dictated what was grown in this garden:

... [I]n those days, the traditional New Zealand Christmas dinner was – despite whatever the poultry growers will try and convince you – was generally spring lamb. And with your spring lamb you had new potatoes that you aimed to have ready in your own garden and the same with peas, from your own garden, and carrots or whatever other vegetables you liked. But you tried to get all your vegetables ready in time for Christmas dinner yourself. So that was why we had two lots of potatoes. The new ones for Christmas and the main ones for keeping later on. Oh, and onions and things like that were grown – Pukekohe Long Keeper.<sup>36</sup>

Audrey believed that 'the vegetable garden, the one that was producing food, was really more important than the flower garden', an important point given the discussion of the preceding chapters.



**Figure 30: Audrey and Dennis Potter with friend, tea party in the back garden. Again, the tall trees are a notable feature**

**Source: Audrey Potter Private Collection**

It is also noteworthy that Audrey's mother did the vegetable gardening, as her parents had separated when she was four. Audrey considered a woman doing the vegetable gardening to have been unusual. '[T]he general run at that time, the general rule, was that generally the

<sup>35</sup> Audrey Potter, interviewed 24 August 2005

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

man did the vegetables and women looked after the flowers... Men looked on it more as a utility thing, helping out with the cost of living, by growing as many vegetables.' This attitude reflects the same view of gardening offered by historians covered in Chapter One. Audrey's grandfather, who lived nearby, did come around and help with scything and digging.

Despite the dedication to the vegetable garden, flowers featured. Audrey's mother 'had quite a large flower garden too. She had a rose bed. People generally had a... separate bed for the roses.'

There was a concrete path that led from the back porch down to the door in the side for the workshop, and... another one went alongside the house to a gate and some trellis that took you out to the drive out to the gate, and that left a triangular bed... That was... the rose bed there. And then around the front she had more borders around the edge of the house, and down the side of the paths, and across the front... From the front you would see flowers. There were some shrubs. She had a rambling rose on the fence between our place and the Presbytery next door, and that was Paul Scarlet Rambler. It seems to have been quite a popular one, because when I got married I shifted round into Titoki Street, and my mother in law had also planted one. And apart from that there was a lilac, and a rhododendron, and what we always used to call japonica... We had a flowering cherry there too, and some little prunus ones... And round the house geraniums on the sunny side, and down the shady side was hydrangeas... We also had a Forsythia, and a Judas tree. My mother liked the flower in that. And at one time we had a ribbonwood. Grandfather planted a ribbonwood. But that got its roots damaged when they put through the high pressure for the water...<sup>37</sup>

As well as flowers and flowering trees, there were also some native plants. Particularly noteworthy were the hebes.

The Dig for Victory campaign did not appear to have made much of an impression on this situation.

Yes, well you see we weren't affected by that because we had our own, you know, garden at home. The main thing that affected us during the war was we dug a bomb shelter in the garden amongst the orchard trees. I don't know how much use it would have been. But it came in very handy as a hut for us to play in later on. And everyone was supposed to have their own shelter dug you see... [A]s far as... any city schemes and that for gardening during the war, I couldn't really help you with that.

Audrey did think that as an eleven year old she would not have remembered this particularly well, yet her other memories are very clear, and her initial response that nothing changed at home, because of the prior existence of the fruit and vegetable gardens there, is very instructive. The fruit trees were planted just after the house was built, approximately in 1929

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.



or 1930. Furthermore, as Figure 28 shows, the back part of the section, where the orchard stood, was marked off as a potential subdivision in 1940; Audrey remembers this being sold to the school at the conclusion of the war.



**Figure 31: 2 Puriri Street, c1942. Major changes have taken place, especially the removal of many large trees**

**Source: Audrey Potter Private Collection**

Audrey's friend around the corner in Totara Street seemed to live in a more normal family: 'my friend's father did all the vegetable garden. If her mother wanted anything done in the flower garden, any heavy digging, he would do that too. But generally, she looked after the flower garden... I think it would have been the quarter acre... because they did have room for the trees and a reasonable sort of vegetable garden.'<sup>38</sup> Included in this, 'their father had an asparagus bed... [A] special one on its own. And they had a few fruit trees. Greengage, and Blue Diamond plum, I think one or two apples.' The asparagus was in a raised bed. The forms of these gardens were roughly similar, but labour organisation was quite different.

Soil type was an important issue for gardeners in this area. '[A]ll the soil around the Bush was a very heavy soil that set like concrete. You had to be careful when you worked it', hence the raised bed for the asparagus in Totara Street. To look after the soil, 'a man' would dig it over in the autumn. Some would then be broken down and planted 'in lupins or barley for a green crop to be turned in in the spring, and some... she'd leave in big lumps... and put lime on it and leave it for the weather, for the frosts... to break down.' Green waste was kept for a rubbish pile: 'She had what she called a compost heap. It was really a rubbish heap of plant

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.



material. But I don't remember her actually mixing it in to the soil. I presume she might have.' Green manures, liming and rotted plant matter – not the scientific compost examined in Chapter Five – were the principal means for maintaining fertility in this difficult area. Male labour was required annually to work the soil and, in the absence of a husband, hired labour, a nearby father, and later a small rotary hoe were employed.

In a similar vein, the work of mowing the lawn – the suburban man's 'ritual harvest' according to Belich<sup>39</sup> – as well as of irrigating the garden, both roles for the husband, needed to fall to others. Indeed, as will be seen, lawn mowing was frequently *not* the job of husband, but of son or brother. In this case it could also fall on the daughter. While a scythe was used on the long grass in the orchard, the lawn at Puriri Street was cut with a push-mower. 'My two brothers and I, we had the job of mowing the lawn. We had two mowers. One was easier to push than the other. That was the one I usually got.'<sup>40</sup> 'Priming' the electric pump for the water was a more specifically assigned task:

We had a well and an electric pump to start with, until the high pressure system was put down the street. I remember that had to be primed to get it to start... My eldest brother had the job of doing that. I didn't. But of course once the high pressure went on we didn't have to worry about that. Some people had the old rams. I know we visited at a place further down Puriri Street, on the other side of it. They had a ram to bring the water up, and the next door neighbour when I lived in Titoki Street, they had an old ram. They no longer used it of course. They were connected. But the old ram was still there. A lot of people had the old windmill for drawing up the water. The ones around in Totara Street, they had had the windmill, but the bottom part was left as the pump house. And that was where they had their electric pump. But my grandfather had... a windmill, the one in Elizabeth Street. I remember that going there to draw up the water.<sup>41</sup>

This garden was therefore a place marked out with particular roles. Grandfather, mother, brothers and sister, and the hedge-trimming, herb-growing next-door neighbour, had particular jobs to perform to keep up this site of self-provisioning and beauty. The absence of the husband who, from the 1920s, according to Jock Phillips, was meant to be spending more time at home on lawn and vegetable garden,<sup>42</sup> brought the gendering of these roles into relief, but also showed that such gendering was not essential to maintenance. Audrey's mother was the vegetable gardener.

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<sup>39</sup> James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders, 1880s to the Year 2000* (Auckland, 2001), p.155

<sup>40</sup> Audrey Potter, interviewed 24 August 2005

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Jock Phillips, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pakeha Male – A History* (Auckland, 1996), pp. 227, 234

Like many other gardeners, Audrey struggled to remember plant or seed retailers, focussing on the sharing of plant materials between family and others.

Well, my mother used to often buy plants at England's, in town... There might have been a firm called Gibbons, I'm not sure of that though, along in Colombo Street, along near Lichfield Street, or Tuam Street. Sort of round about there. Might have been Tuam Street. Because she occasionally got plants there, too. But otherwise, we planted seeds, or cuttings and things from her parents, or from friends. That was the way you got seeds or cuttings and plants and things, from your neighbours and friends, if you liked them, and put them in the garden.<sup>43</sup>

Produce, when successful, could also be given away, and this created a sense of pride. For Audrey's mother, despite the hard work in the vegetable garden and the emphasis on producing food, this pride came from annual shows of sweet peas, a neighbourhood marvel apparently resulting from the presence of the substation on Jimmy Wilson's property whose walls, rich in lime, fertilised the soil. 'People used to stop and look at all these sweet peas, because she always had loads of them to give away, because there were far too many to keep. And those she often let re-seed, just come up, until the colours began to disappear from them, and she'd plant some new seeds there.'<sup>44</sup> This garden, abundant with fruit and vegetables, roses and sweet peas, required a great deal of carefully orchestrated labour, but ultimately provided great satisfaction and, evidently, joy to passers-by.

The tendency to conceive of Christchurch gardens as being a 'type' disintegrates to a certain extent even by looking at another garden down the same road. Cushla Barker, a Rutherford married to a descendant of Dr Samuel Barker, recalled a half acre garden she frequently visited in the 1930s in Puriri Street, probably the Hurst Seager house at number 135.<sup>45</sup> The mother of Sanger Holmes had lived on this property bordering the Avon River after her husband died in 1918. Sanger lived there from the mid 1930s, and 'dedicated himself to the dahlias' about which 'he was an authority'.<sup>46</sup> This garden, although about the same size, was quite different from Audrey's. Sanger 'was fascinated by the stream behind him. He... had a summer retreat... [H]e cleaned up a few of the bushes and plants, and they were natives, I think... And he just... kept them trimmed'. Far from being a site of labour, 'it was a very peaceful place behind that house.' Indeed, for Cushla, at least, it was a site of beauty and leisure. The dahlias were by a lawn tennis court, at the back of the house, towards the river. It was a productive site as well, but Cushla's recollections did not feature this: 'he grew vegetables... Nothing exotic I don't think. But I wouldn't think they'd ever have to buy...

<sup>43</sup> Audrey Potter, interviewed 24 August 2005

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Thanks to Jim Allen for this information; pers. comm. 11 October 2005

<sup>46</sup> Cushla Barker, interviewed 25 August 2005

vegetables. I don't think there were many fruit trees there. There might have been a few espaliered ones along the wall. I can't remember an orchard of fruit trees.' Trimming the laurel hedge, however, was an important task. '[H]e was always cutting his laurel hedge. Tremendous job'.<sup>47</sup> At the gates by the drive were two maples.

In the 1970s, Des McSweeney bought 116 Puriri Street, immediately across the road, and inherited its landscape plan, produced by Buxton.<sup>48</sup> It was behind a Halswell stone fence, and called 'Strathmore'. 'We bought it from the original owners (Dartnell)'.<sup>49</sup> Despite the Buxton landscaping, 'the final layout of the garden departed markedly from the plan'. Nevertheless, it was a garden 'characterised by grace, charm and space and all the signs of plenty of money!'.<sup>50</sup> Like the Holmes property, 'Strathmore' featured a stream boundary. It was a garden of leisure.

Not far from this home, Des's father had bought 80 Hinau Street in 1939. Built in 1918 by David Waghorn's grandfather, who also laid out the garden, by 1954 it had been in the hands of only two families. Des remembered this half acre section also having a laurel front hedge, with the house well back from the road. Between the house and the hedge were ornamental trees, laburnum, tamarisk, rowan, prunus, lilac as well as hydrangeas. There was a rose bed along the driveway, and 'in the early days a large rectangular rose bed surrounded by lawn'. At the back of the house, was a lawn and vegetable plot, which was 'very large and supplied all the fruit and vegetables for a large family – potatoes, silverbeet (*ad nauseum!*) cabbage, carrot, onion, rhubarb'. David Waghorn recalled 'a lot of fruit trees – winter kole [Winter Cole] and boncretian pears, red and golden delicious apples, also grannie smith and Irish peach, cherry plum – nothing exotic – not even lemons! [sic]'.<sup>51</sup> From 1941 there was also asparagus.<sup>52</sup> Seeds for the garden came from a nearby general store. Like Audrey's half acre, this Hinau Street garden featured food production. Des maintained that the garden 'was utilitarian and aesthetics did not come into it'.<sup>53</sup> Unlike Audrey's garden, the front was in decorative trees and shrubs, as well as roses, obscured from the street.

The eight-year-old Judith Todd moved to 12 Rochdale Street, 'just by the Boy's High School', with her mother and siblings in 1940.<sup>54</sup> Judith's father had to stay on the family farm

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Des McSweeney to Matt Morris, letter, 12 August 2005

<sup>49</sup> Des McSweeney to Matt Morris, letter, 7 October 2005

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> David Waghorn quoted by Des McSweeney in Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Des McSweeney to Matt Morris, letter, 12 August 2005

<sup>53</sup> Des McSweeney to Matt Morris, letter, 7 October 2005

<sup>54</sup> Judith Todd, interviewed 31 August 2005

at Waipara. Already established were a peach and a nectarine, a macrocarpa hedge and an ash tree. Whether this was one of Jane Deans' trees is not known. Judith's mother established a vegetable garden at the back, in which were grown 'all the sort of ordinary vegetables, except potatoes', silverbeet, cabbages, lettuces, tomatoes, peas, leeks, beans. They called this 'our Digging for Victory'. She continued, 'I mean, they did it in England. But we just did it. I mean we called it Digging for Victory because, if you didn't dig your garden you didn't get anything to eat!... You see, we were farming people.' The air raid shelter they had to dig, however, took up a large portion of the vegetable garden, which, due to the low lying area, filled up with water. 'I'm glad there wasn't an air raid, because I wouldn't have like to have jumped into this swimming pool! It was hilarious, you know. It was quite a serious business when you realise how close we were to being invaded, but as children we thought it was all just fun.' Pumpkin runners from the garden were trained over the top of the shelter. The vegetable garden was retained after the War. 'I mean, to go and buy a lettuce was infra dig... My mother had green fingers', a result of her farming background. An asparagus bed was established – fertilised with sheep manure – rhubarb grown, wine berries experimented with, strawberries planted into a separate bed, tomatoes regularly grown. Neighbours also continued growing vegetables after the War: 'people still prefer their fresh vegetables... Rather nice to go out and just pick the salad'. Digging for Victory was a way of making something very ordinary seem like fun.

More important for Judith's mother was the flower garden. In this were roses, delphiniums, an established border of grape hyacinths running around the front, 'in behind a row of mixed primroses, and that was absolutely beautiful every year'. She also grew Soleil d'or. The flower garden was mostly at the front, and along the 'side lawn', which was 'quite good for cricket'.<sup>55</sup> Native plants did not feature, 'they just don't look right in what I call an English garden'. Nevertheless, Judith did remember an uncle in Chilcombe Street who had 'an area of natives'. Audrey's brother mowed the lawn; he made pocket money mowing other peoples' lawns as well. The flower garden, with grape hyacinths and gladioli, pictured below (Figure 32), was much smaller than the vegetable garden, as can be seen from the garden plan in Figure 33.

Plants were sometimes purchased, although this was expensive. Like others in this chapter, Judith remembered 'a lot of swapping of plants'. '[W]e had Mrs Smith planted there, and Mrs Brown was over there... I've got primroses out here that have been fairly well travelled around New Zealand... [I]t was a friendly thing to do, to swap plants and things like that.'

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<sup>55</sup> Judith noted that Graham Dowling, the future captain of the New Zealand cricket team, used to visit their home as a three-year-old neighbour.



**Figure 32: Flower border along front of house, 12 Rochdale Street**  
**Source: Judith Todd Private Collection**

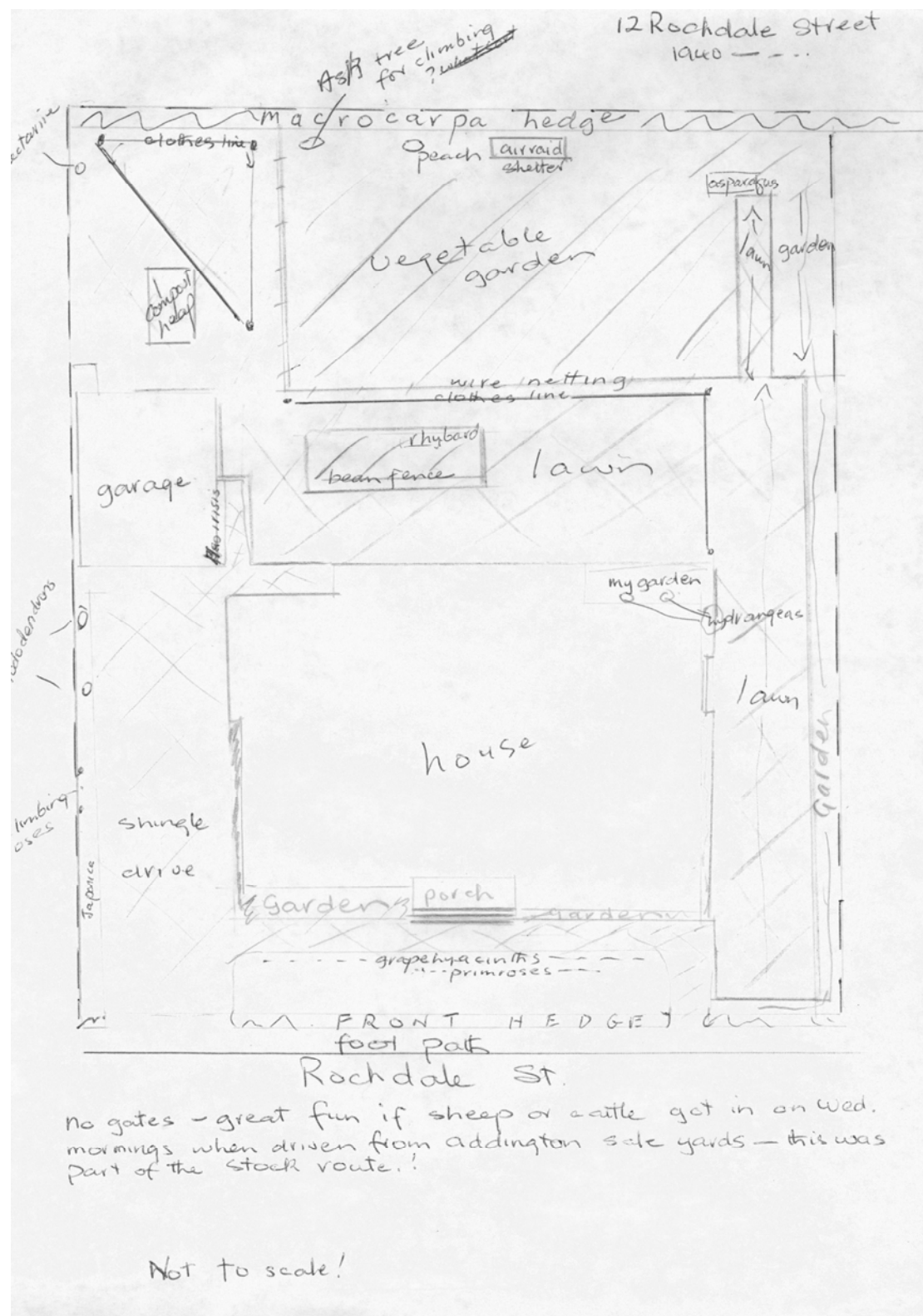
The 32 perch Rochdale Street section had ‘bluish, puggy’ soil, immediately improved with about six dray loads of horse manure brought in from Marshlands Road. They also established compost heaps, made out of the gratings from imported china.

We had a very good compost system. You had about three compost heaps going, and you filled one up, and then when that was getting full you started the next one and then, by the time you got to the third one the first one was ready to use, and that went – you know, that kept the soil going. Because there wasn’t the money to buy fertilisers and things. You just used, almost organic gardening. No, it was very important to have your compost heap!<sup>56</sup>

In addition to this, prunings from the macrocarpa hedge were burned, adding to soil fertility.

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.



**Figure 33: Plan of 12 Rochdale Street, 1940, showing the massive vegetable garden**  
Source: Judith Todd

In the 1890s subdivision plan of the Deans estate a three acre section shows as number 120, on the corner of Harakeke and Matai Streets, and bounded to the north by the Avon River. Although subdivision had taken place on this block by World War Two, one half acre, at 49

Harakeke Street was still ‘completely undeveloped’ in 1945, when June Stewart and her husband purchased it.<sup>57</sup> ‘There was a little house and a lot of lawn, and the border down this side... was full of twitch and Californian thistle’, which was ‘pure hell, because it went down so deep... We didn’t have anything in that border for years’. Initially the border was put into perennials, but later into shrubs. In this garden, fruit was put in immediately. ‘[T]hat, to me, is an important part of gardening. You’ve got to be able to have all these gorgeous things out of the garden. And we’ve got... a good raspberry house and some of the strawberries are under there. The blackcurrants are all the way down that fence... They’re gorgeous.’ A Gravenstein apple was planted as well, though it turned out to be a pale imitation of the one she knew as a child in the extensive Papanui garden she grew up in. Other fruit planted included peaches and a quince.

Irrigation and lawn mowing were intimately connected:

[W]e weren’t on the water supply to begin with, we had our own well... there’s a pump out the back. It had very good pressure; we could run two or three hoses off it. But it meant that you had to take the motor off the lawn mower, which was to begin with at least – we inherited it – a very Heath Robinson sort of effort, a reel mower that they’d put a cover over or something, and then you had this motor which sat on it and turned the wheels, and we used to remove that and put it on the pump and use the pump for water... It was very effective... But we had to run it about once a day, or every day and a half, I suppose. So basically the motor stayed there, and it went onto the mower. But I mean that didn’t last long, because we had to get a proper mower, the other was too much hassle. Apart from anything else it had a cord that you had to follow round, and in those days we hadn’t vegetables out there to begin with, and there were some trees down there, and by the time my husband had taken the mower down there and tried to avoid the trees and not cut the mower cord... we got a motor mower fairly smartly.<sup>58</sup>

Technology, though cumbersome, was adapted quickly in order to transform a weed-infested landscape into a fruitful and beautiful garden.

Soil fertility was also worked on, at first with trenching, and bonfires, and later with compost: ‘We always had a couple of compost heaps on the go... I suppose there was an awful lot written about composting... in those days... I suppose there still is. But we used to follow the garden notes in the paper and get ideas...’ Despite the uptake of these new ideas on composting, the Stewarts never did it

according to all the theorists and the pundits. We just put the stuff in and it composts. We cover it up, and it composts... I mean, they say you’ve got to do all sorts of

<sup>57</sup> June Stewart, interviewed 1 September 2005

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

different things to it, but ours doesn't get anything, except it gets turned when I think the bottom's ready to use, we turn it into the other half, and use the bottom half...<sup>59</sup>

Leaf mould was also made, using the old water tank as a bin.

Reminiscent of Sanger Holmes' garden in Puriri Street, also bordering the Avon, the Harakeke Street garden featured native plants, which they put in 'quite early on'.

[W]e put a lot of natives on the river bank, which I hope are going to be kept. ... We've got a matai, a kahikatea and a rimu, so I've got the three pines, as well as kowhai and, you know, other bits of things. But, we felt that we would have our own little bit of bush simply to educate me more than anything else... I know mother brought back the rimu from the West Coast when she was over there at one stage. We brought back a clump of stuff we found at Okarito, which turned out to have the kahikatea and one or two other nice natives in it. The rimu took ages. We had a little nursery out the back there, and I kept this tiny little seedling for years and years and years. It was a long time before I was able to put it out. And the... kauri... I bought, and it came down from the North Island. It was the second one that I had tried to grow, and I kept it inside for the first year, in the glasshouse in the winter. And then the next winter when I put it out I covered it in straw through the winter. And after that it's just taken off. It grew at least a foot a year.<sup>60</sup>

June's parents had a cottage at Arthur's Pass in the 1930s, and 'Mother was keen on tramping and climbing, so she introduced us to the mountains,' although June missed an early trip to the Pass itself. In the second half of the 1960s she and her husband bought a cottage there. Another favourite native was the 'native clematis', although 'they don't seem to survive'. In keeping with this theme, the garden also featured a rockery, really a sunken garden developed in the later 1940s. Although it did contain some alpine plants from the Pass (collected after 1967), it was primarily where small plants went. 'Mainly in the rockery I've got associations, you know, there are gentians, and little places that you know where you've got things from.'

Despite the emphasis on fruit and vegetables – including an asparagus bed – June's garden was developed as a place of pleasure. It needed to be:

Somewhere where the kids can play, where they don't have to worry about it, but where I can pick lots of flowers, and where... most of the plants have got a history. You get plants from your friends, and, you know, that's going to be the hardest part of moving... And, oh, I don't know, it's got to be a place where you feel comfortable, where you don't have to, well, you do have to work at it. It's a joy to work at it. But you must be able to enjoy it. Sit back... and think, gosh, I can't bear to leave this...<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.



This garden featured a tennis court, a rose garden, and a wisteria laden with memories and with bees. '[T]he kids had a playhouse beside it, and when it flowered we couldn't use the sandpit because there were too many bees... [I]t scents the garden for miles around. Scent is another thing I like in my gardens. I always have to have daphnes or boronias, or freesias in the house...' Camellias featured as well, one of which was 'brought over as a seedling from Mother'. In June's garden, full of memories connecting her back to her mother and the large, 'wild' garden of her childhood, pleasure and serenity, after five years of breaking in, were the key features. Ecologically, the garden created a new piece of native bush along the river, even though 'Deans Bush was not known virtually in those days. Never dreamt of going there. We had a good English garden.' Her husband – a keen amateur botanist – and her mother's own love of the mountains, stimulated the planting of natives. The landscape here, with its banks sloping to the river, leant itself to such planting, just as it had for Sanger Holmes. These gardens, in the Fendalton part of the original Riccarton estate, were quite different from Audrey's.

### **South of Riccarton Road**

The land to the south of the Riccarton Estate is now characterised by Riccarton Mall, the largest shopping complex in New Zealand, and state housing subdivisions. It has a very different feel from the area already discussed, largely due to the overall lack of trees and high fences. Henry Washbourne owned Rural Section 10, granted in 1851. The fifty acre block ran west from Hagley Park to Mandeville Street. Rural Section 155 sat alongside this west to Clarence Road. The block fronting Riccarton Road between Clarence Road and Matipo Street, Rural Section 153, was owned by the Rhodes brothers.<sup>62</sup> Oakford, where George Rhodes lived, masked 'the probable urupa, or burial ground, for the Putaringamotu pa', which was discovered in 1965 under the tennis court.<sup>63</sup> To the west of the Rhodes block was Rural Section 78. John Shand's one hundred acre estate, Rural Section 95, ran to Wharenuui Road. Shand, grandfather of Yeo Shand the compost advocate, arrived on the *Isabella Hercus* in 1851. Most of Shand's estate was eventually bought by the government for State housing during World War Two.<sup>64</sup> Further west was Rural Section 85.<sup>65</sup>

Subdivision of these estates began in 1879, with the opening up of Rural Sections 78 and 155. The first took in Wainui Street, Cutlers Road and Riccarton Road.<sup>66</sup> The second ran from

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<sup>62</sup> Ian McBride, pp.21-22

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p.5

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., pp.18, 72

<sup>65</sup> DP 2438, 1907 Subdivision of RS 85, LINZ

<sup>66</sup> DP 358, 1879 Subdivision of RS 78, LINZ

Riccarton Road south to Lyndon Street, and west from Picton Avenue to Clarence Street. Most of the properties were exactly quarter of an acre, although those on the east side of Picton Avenue were between 36 and 37 perches (Figure 34).<sup>67</sup> Further subdivision occurred in 1897, immediately to the west on the Rhodes estate south of Elizabeth Street.<sup>68</sup> The portion of the Rhodes estate north of Elizabeth Street between Clarence and Division Streets was surveyed for subdivision in 1903,<sup>69</sup> followed in 1904 by a portion including Division, Rotherham and Clarence Streets.<sup>70</sup> John Shand's son Thomas began subdividing the Shand estate in 1907, with a block between Manor and Wharenui Roads off Riccarton Road. These properties were again mostly one quarter of an acre exactly, with a strip of sections along Wharenui Road being one rood nineteen perches or one rood three perches. Four lots were thirty-seven perches (Figure 35).<sup>71</sup> Further west, part of Rural Section 85 was subdivided the same year to Middleton Road, with lots between one rood and thirty-seven perches. The standard quarter acre property prevailed, with only one exception of half an acre.<sup>72</sup> Thus south of Riccarton Road the quarter acre section became the norm almost from the outset of subdivision, as opposed to the pattern in RS 163 where the first sections tended to be larger.

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<sup>67</sup> DP 552, 1879 Subdivision of RS 155 (redrawn in 1959), *LINZ*

<sup>68</sup> DP 1307, 1897 Subdivision of RS 153, *LINZ*

<sup>69</sup> DP 1883, 1903 Subdivision of RS 153, *LINZ*

<sup>70</sup> DP 2052, 1904 Subdivision of RS 153, *LINZ*

<sup>71</sup> DP 2438, 1907 Subdivision of RS 95, *LINZ*

<sup>72</sup> DP 2470, 1907 Subdivision of RS 85, *LINZ*

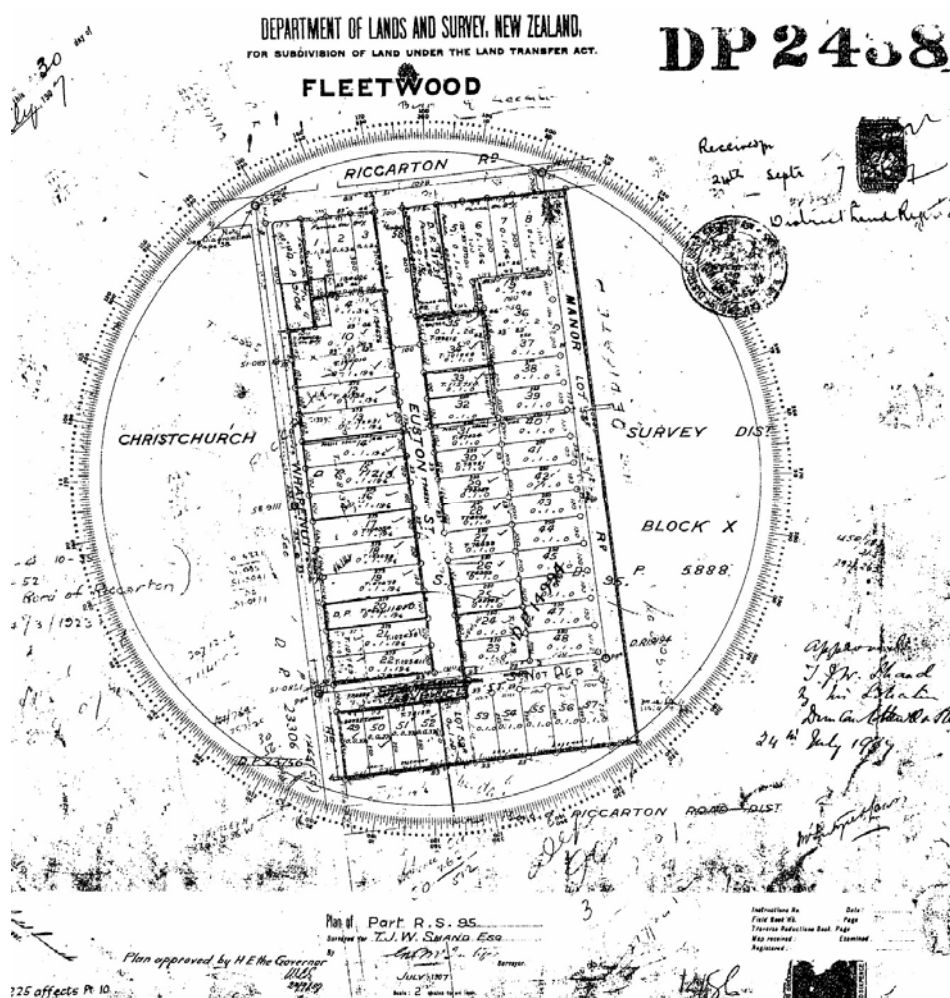


**Source:** *LINZ*

<sup>73</sup> DP 5888, 1921 Subdivision of RS 78 and 95, *LINZ*

<sup>74</sup> DP 9104, 1928 Subdivision of RS 95; DP 9725, 1930 Subdivision of RS 95; DP 10273, 1930 Subdivision of RS 95; DP 10262, Subdivision of RS 78 and 95, *LINZ*

Rhodes estate,<sup>75</sup> and small portions of Rural Section 155 continued to be marked out in 1935.<sup>76</sup> A large block of the Shand estate was surveyed between 1938 and 1940, including the formation of Shand Crescent, between Euston and Rattray Streets off Riccarton Road.<sup>77</sup> This area, including Centennial Avenue commemorating the nations' centenary, was a showpiece for the first Labour Government's State housing scheme.



**Figure 35: DP 2438, Subdivision of RS 95, 1907, with quarter acre sections prevailing.**  
Source: LINZ

Maurice Staunton was born in 1919 and grew up on 'the corner of what is now Burdale Street, but in those days was called Alma Street, and Clarence Road' in Lower Riccarton.<sup>78</sup> This was part of the original Rhodes subdivision of 1897. Maurice's father 'always had a very good garden, an excellent garden.' Opposite their home, on the other side of Burdale Street,

<sup>75</sup> DP 8303, 1926 Subdivision of RS 153, LINZ

<sup>76</sup> DP 10581, 1935 Subdivision of RS 155; DP 10667, 1935 Subdivision of RS 155, LINZ

<sup>77</sup> DP 14994 (1938); DP 11293 (1938); DP 11457 (1938); DP 11617 (1939); DP 15001 (1939); DP 14999 (1939); DP 15009 (1939); DP 15015 (1939); DP 15023 (1939); DP 15016 (1939); DP 15008 (1939); DP 15002 (1939); DP 15035 (1940); DP 15040 (1940) Subdivisions of RS 95, LINZ

<sup>78</sup> Maurice Staunton, interviewed 29 August 2005

was a bakery which kept horses for deliveries.<sup>79</sup> The manure from these horses, and from the forty fowls Maurice's father kept 'used to be composted down and put into the soil; we had some terrific crops there.' The garden, as Maurice remembered, was very much his father's garden. '[M]y father, he had an excellent garden, grew a lot of flowers and vegetables, in those days in the Depression, the severe Depression back in the '30s.' When I asked him to describe it, it was very much the food that mattered:

We had an Irish Peach apple, which was an excellent apple. And there was a Sturmer, cooking apple. We had a plum, an English plum. Cherry tree. They were most of the fruit. Oh, two apricots, and a peach. But the place was always kept immaculate, really was. It had a privet fence, which, privet fences today, well, they're not grown because they do get the blight and that sort of thing. But it was always kept well trimmed... The house was more or less on the corner, and it [the vegetable garden] was on the side in Alma Street. But we always had a very good garden there. Excellent garden... But back in those days, I'll never forget. It was the days of the Depression and things were pretty hard, pretty hard indeed.<sup>80</sup>

Wharenuui School, which Maurice attended, also placed emphasis on vegetable growing. As McBride noted, the school had its own vegetable plots during World War One; the same was true during the Depression.

[W]hen I was at primary school we had our own garden plots at Wharenuui School, and... my father... had a dairy farm opposite the Wharenuui School, where a lot of the state housing is... now between Matipo Street and Wharenuui Road. And... I used to get a lot of the stack bottom, rotted stack bottom and cow manure and put it in that plot. And our plot seemed to exceed the others as far as cropping was concerned. Lupins used to grow about 6 foot high. Plenty of nitrogen in the soil.<sup>81</sup>

Grown in the school plots were 'spinach, and lettuce, broad beans, peas, a row of potatoes. And radish, beetroot, our green crops which we dug in, some of the children would have oats, some barley, some lupins, some mustard. And we used to have to have a diary of when they were planted, dug in, etc.' Maurice's father grew the same types of crops at home.

Maurice's mentions of green crops and animal manure for keeping up soil fertility fit the chronology established in Chapter Five, as do those of other interviewees. He also noted the promotion of compost during World War Two, but was sceptical about its overall efficacy:

You could put all the compost in the ground, but you've got to have something to give it a bit of a boost too, some other nutrients, you know, in the soil... The compost

<sup>79</sup> See DP 10667, 1935 Subdivision of RS 155, showing the 'Bake House' and, off Clarence Road, a house set close to the road on a 26 perch section, with a massive back yard.

<sup>80</sup> Maurice Staunton, interviewed 29 August 2005

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

is very good for retaining moisture in the soil, but, my father... blood and bone was the main fertiliser that he used. A bit of super, but blood and bone fertiliser was used in those days. You could buy sacks of fertiliser from the old by-products at Sockburn at pretty reasonable price, and it was used quite extensively.<sup>82</sup>

Again, specific gardening advice on compost making was largely ignored. Furthermore, proximity to animal manure or by-products was an important factor for gardeners.

As with Audrey, I asked about the effect of the war on gardening, and at first it seemed as if the war had made an impression. Maurice noted that '[t]here was a special book which was published... about Digging for Victory. And it was a jolly good booklet too, yes, it really was. Saying what fertilisers to use, that sort of thing.'<sup>83</sup> This reference to the Department of Agriculture booklet mentioned in Chapter Five seemed to suggest that the advice and promotions of the period had stimulated a particular gardening type. However, when I returned to the subject later, the response was very similar to Audrey's:

M: Did people grow more vegetables during the war time, or less, or no difference?

MS: No, it wouldn't have made much difference.

M: Because everybody was already producing food?

MS: Yes.<sup>84</sup>

Fruit and vegetable production did seem to be important during the war, but not because of it. The growing of food was a part of life that had been significant at least since the Depression, which seemed to have had a much more profound effect on day to day living than the war.

Maurice, in mentioning the school garden, suggested that it was a primary source for learning the basics of horticulture, and for stimulating an interest in it: 'we enjoyed it'. According to Maurice, the same was true for Lawrie Metcalf, who later became superintendent of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens.<sup>85</sup> Lawrie lived around the corner in Dilworth Street. His garden was also maintained solely by his father, until Lawrie took up horticulture in 1945. '[D]ue to its situation,' he noted, 'it was probably one of the coldest parts of Christchurch at that time.' The garden's main functions, he said, 'were typically for the production of vegetables for the kitchen and a flower garden'. Soil fertility 'was maintained solely by the use of limited amounts of compost made on the property, otherwise nothing special was

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

done.’<sup>86</sup> It was, from this description, exceedingly normal, very similar to the Staunton garden.

Picton Avenue, where Lilian Franks lived from 1941, bisects both Burdale Street and Dilworth Street. Her home at number 75<sup>87</sup> was in one of the earliest subdivisions in the area, the 1879 subdivision of Rural Section 155 (Figure 34). Once again, this quarter acre section was remembered primarily as a site of food production, with the vegetable garden taking up ‘the entire back part of the section’.<sup>88</sup> It needed to, as crops grown included potatoes, peas, beans, silverbeet, onions, carrots, parsnips, cabbage, beetroot, tomatoes, lettuce, radish, red and black currants, gooseberries, rhubarb, pears (one of which had four varieties on it), walnuts, grapes ‘and espaliered apple trees along a paling fence.’<sup>89</sup> There were also raspberry canes against a shed and strawberries in season,<sup>90</sup> and herbs: ‘Mint, Parsley, Sage, Thyme and possibly chives.’<sup>91</sup> This garden, maintained by her father, ‘provided virtually our family’s total needs of fruit and vegetables.’<sup>92</sup>

The front garden featured bedding plants, and the flower garden was also tended by Lilian’s father.

He purchased boxes of several dozen (per box) bedding plants of different varieties from Dalley’s Grain Store near ‘Nancy’s Corner’... These were arranged in attractive displays amongst the permanent plants and bushes, e.g., roses, Daphne, Xmas lilies, hydrangeas etc. A hand lawnmower was the order of the day, with the edges being trimmed with an old pair of sheep-shears.<sup>93</sup>

This garden, with shrubs inter-planted with bedding plants around an immaculately trimmed lawn, seems to sum up what is meant by the quintessential kiwi quarter acre.

Work on maintaining soil fertility was similar in Lilian’s garden as for the others already discussed. Lupins were grown for digging in, and lime and blood and bone were utilised. Sheep, cow and horse manure could be obtained from relatives’ farms. Fish heads were dug under the grape vine. Some vegetable scraps were trenched, but there was also a compost heap for kitchen scraps and waste material from the garden. Lilian also remembered the low-lying nature of the area, and its abundance of water. There was an artesian well behind the

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<sup>86</sup> Lawrie Metcalf to Matt Morris, email, 26 August 2005

<sup>87</sup> Lilian Franks to Matt Morris, email, 31 May 2006

<sup>88</sup> Lilian Franks to Matt Morris, email, 13 August 2005

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Lilian Franks to Matt Morris, second email, 13 August 2005

<sup>91</sup> Lilian Franks to Matt Morris, email, 10 September 2005

<sup>92</sup> Lilian Franks to Matt Morris, email, 13 August 2005

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

house, with a ram. Again, water was pumped onto roof-top tanks. After all of this became redundant with the advent of high-pressure water, the ram was still used for garden and laundry use, and, 'being a concreted space below ground, and cool with a wooden cover over it', it could be used to store perishables and set jellies. A refrigerator was not acquired until the later 1950s.<sup>94</sup>

There is much about this garden, as with the others nearby already mentioned, that fits what has been said about 'the kiwi garden' of the period. Layout, as well as the garden's rigid gendering is also borne out. However, while Belich claimed that in 'the cities, the front garden, producing flowers, belonged to the woman of the house; the back garden, producing vegetables, to the man',<sup>95</sup> these examples suggest a difference between perception and reality. The front garden in Picton Avenue was as much the work of the man as the back, food producing, garden, as it was for Maurice and Lawrie. Lilian's mother's involvement was in cooking and preserving the foods he produced. Beans were sliced and salted down in an earthenware crock, pears were bottled. Indeed, Audrey Potter's garden, not far away, was entirely managed by her mother, with the assistance of male labour where possible. While Audrey saw Belich's dichotomy as the norm, neither she nor any of these studies conformed in a pure sense to that type. The normative gender division was in reality very elastic.

Also of interest is that despite difficulties in acquiring the proper equipment, high standards were maintained – the lawn edges at Picton Avenue were trimmed with sheep shears. A distinction between the order, 'excellence', neatness of the respectable working-class gardens on the southern side of Riccarton Road and the more relaxed and informal gardens in Riccarton-Fendalton is certainly class-related. So, too, is the fact of these gardens' exposure to the street, in contrast with homes like Strathmore, where the gardens were hidden behind towering stone walls.

The gendering of the garden is complicated further in Brian Gilberthorpe's case, as will be seen. Brian, whose great grandparents had moved to a farm now at the very edge of the city in 1859 (where Gilberthorpes Road is now), moved to a house close to the Staunton home as a fourteen year old boy in 1952.<sup>96</sup> This was part of the same 1879 subdivision as Lilian's home. In this garden, near the northeast corner of Burdale and Clarence Streets, old age had led to

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, p.349

<sup>96</sup> The Gilberthorpes lived next to the bakery Maurice Staunton mentioned as being directly across the road from his home. They disagree, however, as to which side of Clarence Street this was. Brian Gilberthorpe, interviewed 30 August 2005. The deposited plan shows the bake house on Alma Street next door to the Store, which was on the north east corner of the intersection. DP 10667, Subdivision of 155, 1935, LINZ



neglect of the garden. It 'had gone to wrack and ruin'. Describing the reclaimed garden, Brian said:

We never went much in for native plants. It was mainly vegetables. Not so much fruit because they were... smaller sections. When we first came here I think there was an old apple tree, and may have been a peach tree. But we rooted that out to make more room for vegetables... [I]t was a custom in those days to have as large a vegetable garden as you could get in. And that was to provide the family with all the stuff, vegetables right through the year...<sup>97</sup>

Runner beans were salted down and put in crocks, and tomatoes, lettuces and radishes were all produced. There were also a couple of climbing roses on the east side of the house, as well as standard and bush roses.

Soil fertility management followed the predictable pattern:

I can recall my parents getting stuff like horse manure from time to time... But apart from that it was the usual, especially in the vegetable garden it was blood and bone, a dash of super or something like that, a dash of lime on particular plants... lime was good... I don't remember having lupins, or anything like that. Perhaps in the first year we were here, perhaps my father grew some lupins and dug them in. I think that might've been a possibility... But I'm quite fortunate here, you know, the soil can vary quite dramatically within a block or two. I've got very good... friable soil, but you know, a block or two down the road it's quite clayey. And go a bit further and of course you've got, almost into riverbed.<sup>98</sup>

The possibility that Brian's father might have grown lupins in the first year is significant, however, as it demonstrates the continuation of what appears to have been a masculine tradition soon to fade out. More important, however, is the recognition that soil management techniques depended to a certain extent on soil type; fortuitously Brian's soil did not require much work, whereas others in the area required considerable exertion, as was the case for Audrey.

Like Audrey and her brothers, Brian, as the child, did the lawn mowing. For the rest of the garden, both his parents were actively involved:

[T]hey were both very much into gardening, and I suppose my father must have been slightly unusual for his day. Well both my parents really shared both outside and inside duties round the house. For example my father didn't let my mother iron his shirts. He had to do them... My mother would've sooner been outside doing the

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<sup>97</sup> Brian Gilberthorpe, interviewed 30 August 2005

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

garden than doing the cooking and what-not. So yes, obviously my father did most of the heavy stuff in the garden...<sup>99</sup>

A year after moving to Burdale Street, Brian's father died of a brain tumour. 'After that it was largely my mother who took the garden on, with my sister and myself... doing the odd bit.' While the loss of his father obviously had an impact on garden maintenance, the change was not radical. 'Obviously after my father died I had to do a bit, but there again my mother... as I explained would sooner be outside than inside, and spent most of her moments during the day in reasonable weather out in the garden. So she did most of it...' This example shows how this 'rigidly gendered' work could be redistributed without regard to gender roles. Again, normative gender roles were in practice very pliant and indeed disregarded.

Apart from this fact, Brian believed his garden at Burdale Street to be the norm, and his comments on this are revealing:

Certainly on this side of Riccarton Road, and to a certain extent on the other side. Of course, [on] the other side of Riccarton Road... there were grandiloquent houses, they might have had slightly larger sections. Some of them obviously would have had gardeners in to do the work – some of those ones round the back of Boys' High and what-not. I can remember gardeners working there, I think. They were laid out more palatially, if you like. Some of them had much bigger sections. And because of that they were able to have much bigger trees, you know. Golden beeches, and maples, and things like that. But as flowers were concerned, it wasn't too different. They might have had more than we had here... like azaleas and rhododendrons particularly I remember as being quite shapely, well they still are in those houses over there aren't they... Camelias, I don't think to the same extent as azaleas and rhododendrons, but the normal sort of gamut of spring flowers, daffodils... I remember particularly the azaleas and rhododendrons as they were flowering trees, and blossoms, and... the bigger trees.<sup>100</sup>

Even though there are some similarities, the differentiation between these types of garden is apparent. Indeed, later in the interview Brian admitted that:

Some streets I would hate to have lived in, in Christchurch, because they seemed to be so fanatical about their gardens. We've always had a good garden here, and I keep it reasonable, but some of those streets must've been sheer hell to live in, if you weren't interested in gardening. I suppose you wouldn't have moved in in the first place. That street that runs off Straven Road, opposite Boys' High School there [Rochdale Street, where Judith Todd lived], used to win the prizes a number of years. Well, you would be ostracised and forced to leave the street I think if you didn't measure up!<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

The impression on the southern side of Riccarton Road is that those to the north were immaculate, maintained by gardening fanatics. In contrast, those ‘over there’ saw their gardens as being informal and relaxing. The concern in the south was to keep things tidy, ‘that’s the main reason I do the garden’, as Brian put it. It was also to keep the home productive.

Audrey’s grandparents lived in Elizabeth Street, also south of Riccarton Road. Before retiring there they had farmed on Ryans Road. At Elizabeth Street, Audrey remembered her grandfather ‘had an asparagus bed, a special asparagus bed.’ Her grandparents also grew redcurrants and blackcurrants (the latter for making wine), some cuttings of which travelled to Puriri Street, and a grapevine. He ‘had a good garden, too, a vegetable garden’. But the main feature of this garden for Audrey was the flower garden out the front, in which she bonded with her grandmother.

I used to go around with her [grandmother], and she’d talk to me about the flowers, which were her favourites. Delphiniums, we had delphiniums, too. Delphiniums and roses. She had the old chivalry grass... Sometimes I think it’s called quaking grass... and then the old lily of the valley. So she had these all in a shady spot there. And peonies, of course. She had quite a few of those. And I think she had a tree peony... [S]he really loved the flower garden. She was very fond of her garden. But... I think my grandfather was the one who did the digging, all the hard work....<sup>102</sup>

Yet less traditional ideas found expression in Elizabeth Street gardens as well. Kathleen Guy was born into a state house there on the corner of Centennial Avenue (Figure 36),<sup>103</sup> at 129 Elizabeth Street. Her parents were ‘idealistic’, and the house was on former Shand land.

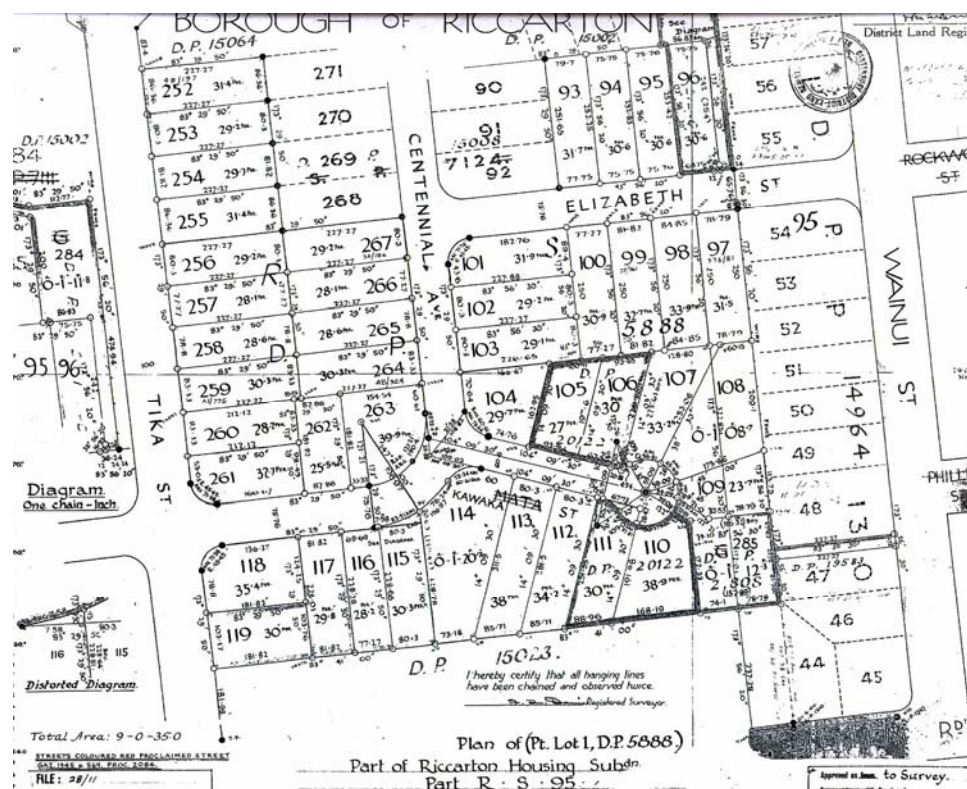
They were both teachers, they were both interested in community, and people, and liberal. And they, among quite a group of intellectual sort of people,<sup>104</sup> were some of the first tenants of the state houses that they had worked so hard, politically to get as part of our scene... And, it’s an interesting state house, because it’s still there, and if you go down Elizabeth Street, on one corner you will see a house that has some very tall trees. And if you go down the street, you will notice that there are other trees, that gradually get lower and lower as you go, because my father planted trees on that place, and the locals thought he was mad. And then they saw what those trees did, and so the next door neighbour planted some, and it’s actually worth a look...<sup>105</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Audrey Potter, interviewed 24 August 2005

<sup>103</sup> Kathleen Guy to Matt Morris, pers. comm., 30 May 2006

<sup>104</sup> One of these, Kathleen later explained, was Winston Rhodes, later Professor of English at Canterbury University and an avowed Marxist. Ibid. *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, however, has him living in a Papanui flat, and later moving to Governor’s Bay. [http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/dnzb/default.asp?Find\\_Quick.asp?PersonEssay=4R13](http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/dnzb/default.asp?Find_Quick.asp?PersonEssay=4R13). Accessed 30 May 2006

<sup>105</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 2 September 2005



**Figure 36: DP 15016, Subdivision of RS 95, 1939, showing the State housing property Kathleen Guy was born into.**

Source: LINZ

They were not native trees, but the fact that the act of planting trees on a small state house section could be regarded as radical, *and* generate environmental change by influencing the decisions of others is noteworthy. Indeed, one of the silver birches planted there was later recognised by the Riccarton Borough Council as being significant, and was protected. A number of trees over the road were likewise protected.<sup>106</sup> The state houses were viewed in this way as sites of transformation, of empowerment, and in this instance it was trees that were the symbols of such reclamation. Just as Brian's memory of well-to-do gardens turned to the leafy streets towards Fendalton, it was trees in Elizabeth Street that represented the re forging of power relationships enabled through the state housing developments.

## Conclusions

Clearly, however, such counter-hegemonic actions were uncommon. Indeed, in 1954 Maurice Staunton and colleagues established the Riccarton Horticultural Society. They thought it would be useful with rapidly increasing subdivision. '[A] lot of them weren't garden-minded.

<sup>106</sup> These trees are not protected under the current system, although they still wear their old 'protected tree' notices. John Thornton (Christchurch City Council) to Matt Morris, email, 2 June 2006

It was just state houses.’<sup>107</sup> Overall, the gardens in this part of the city conformed, outwardly at least, with the type we would expect. But the key point here is that behind first impressions, where similarities stand out, certain variations are also apparent. The detail presented in these studies allows for a better understanding of Christchurch gardens. In Riccarton, the most obvious variation is between the area to the north of Riccarton Road, and the area south of it. The division between gardens of leisure and gardens of labour is clear. So, too, is a difference in perceptions about gardens in the area, where, for example, the gardens along the Avon River could seem informal and lovely to some, but burdensome and constricting to others. Vegetable gardening was important to all; the land provided for the household. Most homes had fruit trees as well, some had quite extensive orchards. This remained the trend throughout the period of suburbanisation of Riccarton. There was certainly prettification, but, apart from select gardens closest to Fendalton, gardens were primarily places of provisioning. World War Two did not have the impact on this that has been attributed to it: if anything, it was the Great Depression that cemented the need for home food production. But even this seems to have been a continuation of an established trend. The great abundance in fruit varieties, for example, speaks not of poverty but of plenty, not of emergency but of long-term planning and accumulated horticultural knowledge. Audrey’s parents established their orchard before the effects of the Depression had set in.

Variation in soil types also matters in Riccarton; swamp, dune and riverbed continue to exert their presence. Here, similarities show. Soil fertility, a question I particularly asked of my interviewees, was routinely maintained first with trenched kitchen waste and wood ash, with some ‘super’ and ‘a dash’ of lime, and latterly with compost. While kept in bins and turned, however, most compost heaps seemed similar to the old ‘rubbish heap’, and only vaguely resembled the compost of the ‘pundits’, as June put it. But a transition of sorts is noticeable. Other technological innovations show up as well, though their application was restricted by income. These are most clearly represented in lawn maintenance, an increasingly important, though not necessarily increasingly present, aspect of garden upkeep at the time Riccarton started being subdivided, as demonstrated in Chapter Six. The only motorised lawn mower mentioned, quickly replaced with a better model, was used in the mid 1940s in the Harakeke Street garden. The motor, however, doubled as a water pumping device. Audrey’s family, to the south, from the 1930 to 1954, had two push mowers, and a scythe for the longer grass; Lilian’s, much further south, had just the one push mower. In this garden, edging tools were improvised out of sheep shearing equipment, but edges were kept. In each of these cases,

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<sup>107</sup> Maurice Staunton, interviewed 29 August 2005

quite considerable trouble was gone to in order to maintain a neat lawn, however makeshift the available equipment.

The kahikatea forest in the centre of the area seems likewise to have made an impression on gardeners there. It is notable that gardens along the Avon featured native trees and shrubs, in imitation of the New Zealand bush. In part this was to do with the nature of the stream, where natives, perhaps carefully trimmed, always seemed appropriate. In June's case, a certain degree of affluence enabled trips into the mountains and the West Coast, informing planting choices and providing plant-collecting opportunities. Gardens backing onto Riccarton Bush itself utilised it as recreational space, although they may not have incorporated the bush into their own gardens. Nevertheless, Audrey does remember hebes in her own garden, and those nearby. For Audrey, however, it was the exotic trees the Deans family planted to protect the forest that had the most significant impact, and the trees of the wealthier part of the former Deans Estate certainly lend it much of its charm. It is significant that this was the case even though properties there were only slightly larger than those on the other side of Riccarton Road, where large trees were thought of as being inappropriate.

Jane Deans, as the principal tree-planter, exemplifies another theme. While gender roles in the garden seem to have been understood as fixed, in few if any cases were such roles adhered to. If anything, the main division was between the outside (garden) – the man's space – and inside (kitchen) – the woman's. But even this generalisation does not work in each case. Whatever may be said, the assumption that the front flower garden was where women worked and the back vegetable garden was where men worked does not hold true.

Finally, these studies have also shown the importance of tradition and memory in shaping the landscape. The inscriptions of landscape with trees, and the flow-on effects of this have already been noted. There is also a certain nostalgia at work, where attachments to memories transferred to plant materials can ensure their survival through multiple progeny. The camellia belonging to June's mother is a case in point, seedlings of which have been distributed throughout a family network spanning generations. Audrey recounted a similar story about a peony. Such stories are not a side-line in home garden history. Along with topography, they are in fact central to it. In every case where I asked where the gardeners learned to garden, it was through watching parents, helping them out, working in gardens with other relatives, talking to friends or, as with Maurice and Lawrie, school. In one case (June), gardening literature was consulted, and Des believed Dalley's to have been a major source of gardening advice. But the doing of gardening inevitably had its roots in experiences as children, and these children ultimately recreated similar gardens to those of their parents, often using the

same genetic stock. This holds equally true for the economic parts of the garden as for the purely aesthetic. In the period covered here, the late 1920s to the 1950s, land uses remained remarkably static, despite the variation in garden styles from north to south.

## 8

# Fendalton

## Introduction

Chapter Seven examined both the Riccarton of the original Deans estate and Riccarton Borough south of Riccarton Road, and noted a sharp difference in the gardens of the former – now classed as Fendalton – and those of the latter. Yet the Fendalton discussed in that chapter has in fact not been imagined as Fendalton proper in the minds of many Christchurch residents and, as shown in Chapter Seven, and by Frieda Looser in her study of the city's historically most exclusive suburb, it has never really shaken its Riccarton identity.<sup>1</sup> 'Riccarter-cum-Fendalton' was a popular descriptor from the mid 1920s.<sup>2</sup> This is exaggerated by the fact that Fendall's original property bordered Waimairi stream, and the sense within true Fendalton – the Fendalton carved out of his original block – is that it is removed again from the liminal space of the 'tree' streets, whose names, after all, commemorated the Deans family and not the young Fendall. This chapter examines gardens close to Waimairi stream and inside deepest Fendalton, showing a pronounced difference between them and those of 'Riccarter-cum-Fendalton' (Appendix 4.iii).

Fendalton, so very different from any other part of Christchurch, is the suburb most strongly associated with the English 'Garden City' image that is meant to represent the rest of the city, as noted by Benjamin McBride.<sup>3</sup> Stephen Eldred-Grigg imagined a view from Cashmere: beyond Hagley Park could be seen 'a forest of oaks, ashes, eucalypts, willows, walnuts, poplars – the 'umbrageous precincts of Fendalton and the other northern and western suburbs...'. In comparison, South Christchurch 'looked as though lava, bursting from the flanks of the extinct volcano on which Cashmere squatted, had flowed out onto the prairie to lay everything waste... A lava of red oxide iron, dingy yellow wood and rusty orange signs,

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<sup>1</sup> Looser gives an impression of being unconvinced about the Riccarton estate's identification with Fendalton post 1910. 'Some new residents, on the subsequent subdivision of the 'Riccarter' estate in the 1920s, chose to use a Fendalton address to differentiate themselves from properties in Riccarton Borough'. 'Fendall's Legacy: Land, Place and People in Fendalton' (M.A., University of Canterbury, 2000), p.9. 'Karewa' (later 'Mona Vale') and Daresbury, both archetypal 'Fendalton' homes, were actually built on the former Riccarton estate: Looser, p.137

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.176

<sup>3</sup> Benjamin McBride, 'Redeveloping Cathedral Square, Christchurch: The English Landscape and the Maintenance of Social Control' (M.A., University of Canterbury, 1998), p.49.



cracked and broken by... railways, factories, chimney stacks and the great stinking towers of the Christchurch Gas Coal and Coke Company Limited.’<sup>4</sup> The well-treed garden zone described by Eldred-Grigg was nevertheless supposedly quintessential Christchurch. It was marketed as such. A tourist brochure from the 1940s, for example, stated that ‘Christchurch is noted for its beautiful homes and gardens, particularly along the Avon River and the Wairarapa Stream and on Cashmere Hills. Here, the city lends itself to beautification and full advantage has been taken of it.’ Photos of Fendalton homes, accompanied by some of Cashmere, illustrated the point. One of these images from Fendalton is in fact a reprint from *The City Beautiful*, and is of ‘Greystones’, discussed in Chapter Three as the home winning the Canterbury Horticultural Society’s home garden competitions over at least a twenty year period (Figure 37).<sup>5</sup>



**Figure 37: ‘Greystones’, Idris Road, Fendalton, 1940**  
**Source: CB, February 1940, p.3**  
**(Reprinted courtesy of the Canterbury Horticultural Society)**

Looser believed that the beautiful gardens noted in Fendalton supposedly had a ‘distinctly English appearance’, particularly from the 1920s.<sup>6</sup> ‘English’ Christchurch was therefore projected out of Fendalton; the ‘more English than England’ cliché nailed to Christchurch,

<sup>4</sup> Stephen Eldred-Grigg, *Oracles and Miracles* (Auckland, 1987), p.9

<sup>5</sup> *Christchurch: Tourist Centre for South Island, New Zealand* (Christchurch, c1946), pp.30-31. It is important to note, too, that descendants of this Paynter now live in ‘Strathmore’, discussed in Chapter Seven: Selwyn Paynter, pers. comm., 1 November 2005. The density of family networks in this part of the city is another of its defining features.

<sup>6</sup> Looser, p.178

Looser states, was applied ‘most fervently to Fendalton’.<sup>7</sup> This cliché has been well contested in recent years,<sup>8</sup> but Looser nevertheless believed that evidence for it could be found in Fendalton’s gardens and architecture.

An English-looking home was surrounded by a landscaped garden. Where many American homes were on public display from the street, ‘English’ homes were approached up a curved drive, lined with trees and further hidden from view by a hedge... The landscaped garden inevitably required an outer planting of beautiful deciduous trees and flowering shrubs, a smooth, green lawn, roses in beds and bowers, an herbaceous borders [sic] and plenty of seating, so placed that the home and garden might be viewed and enjoyed from several aspects.<sup>9</sup>

For Looser, Fendalton gardens were of a particular type: they reflected the English landscaped garden tradition, even if Fendalton remained ‘distinctively antipodean’.<sup>10</sup> In this sense, Fendalton’s gardens are meant to have been similar to the gardens of Adelaide, which, according to Hodgkinson, were modelled on Loudon.<sup>11</sup> In other words, the trope of beautification as discussed in Chapter Three is meant to have applied with peculiar appropriateness to Fendalton proper. This chapter tests this assumption.

### **Fendall’s Legacy**

Frieda Looser, in her thesis ‘Fendall’s Legacy’, recounted the development of Fendalton, from the original fifty acre purchase of RS 18 by the twenty year old Walpole Cheshyre Fendall in 1851. ‘One could easily imagine the young man standing in the midst of his undeveloped swampy flax and tussock and cheerfully, if ironically, proposing that it be called Fendall Town’.<sup>12</sup> The property was bounded to the south by Waimairi Stream and the Deans estate, and to the north by the Wairarapa Stream and Charles Jeffreys’ ‘Bryndwr’. To the south east Fendall Town bordered the Otakaro (Avon) River at Hagley Park. Development along the Wairarapa Stream began as early as 1852 with the survey there of nine one acre lots, and the development of Snowdon Road for access.<sup>13</sup> Most of RS 18 was sold by Fendall

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.206

<sup>8</sup> Benjamin McBride; John Cookson, ‘“Reading Between the Willows”: The Character of Christchurch 1850-2000’ (Christchurch, 2000); Cookson, ‘Pilgrims’ Progress’, in John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall (eds), *Southern Capital: Towards a City Biography*; Mike Smith, ‘Counting Between the Willows: Testing Residential Segregation in Christchurch 1919 to 1938’ (M.A., University of Canterbury, 2004), p.89

<sup>9</sup> Looser, p.179

<sup>10</sup> Frieda Looser, *Fendall’s Legacy: A History of Fendalton and North-West Christchurch* (Christchurch, 2002), p.101

<sup>11</sup> Roma Hodgkinson, ‘The Adelaide Suburban Garden, 1836-1920: A Social and Economic Analysis’ (Ph.D., Flinders University of South Australia, 1995)

<sup>12</sup> Looser, p.28

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p.51

in 1861. The importance of the river frontage, establishment of fences and young trees were selling points by 1863. By 1864 considerable subdivision of the original block had taken place; apart from the first one-acre sections the balance was primarily in five-acre blocks.<sup>14</sup> By 1875, Looser claims, Fendalton had started to look English. 'The rural nature of Fendall Town was characterised by English grass-sown paddocks, watered by gently-flowing streams, grazed by cows, horses and sheep, protected by growing shelter-belts and stands of deciduous English trees, and serviced by narrow stony tracks bordered by hawthorn hedges.'<sup>15</sup> There was little marking this out as being especially different from other parts of Christchurch, where subdivision had already begun. But as social differentiation began affecting suburbs from the 1880s,<sup>16</sup> Fendall Town's gardens became recognisably different from those of the city's other suburbs. By the end of the century, stated Looser, properties in Lower Fendalton 'were increasingly likely to be a gentleman's residence for an urban professional, employing a number of servants, and having a considerable portion of the section devoted to lawns and 'pleasure gardens''.<sup>17</sup> Looser also noted the important point that from the 1880s, apparently, the streams in the Fendall Town area came to be regarded as assets rather than liabilities, although for some they had been important since the 1860s. The Wairarapa Stream, for example, attracted John Macmillan Brown in 1886.<sup>18</sup> Seeing its potentials, he planted his stream with native species.<sup>19</sup>

The original 1852 subdivision was sold as part of the Glanyrafon estate in 1921. Lot Seven on Snowdon Road was the homestead block.<sup>20</sup> Helen Peate's father bought 7 Snowdon Road in about 1945.<sup>21</sup> It was then one and a half acres, later extended to two acres and subsequently subdivided after the period under review. It was as close to the 'true' Fendalton type as possible; the property extended down to Wairarapa Stream and near the stream 'there was an old sod wall that was part of the Fendall Cottage, Fendall's original house'<sup>22</sup> (see Figure 38).

As with most of my interviewees, Helen was most able to conceptualise the garden she grew up in as if she was moving through it. In this case Helen had consulted with her sisters and brother before the interview which is therefore, in some ways, an amalgam of memories:

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p.54

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p.66

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p.68

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p.74

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.79

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p.117

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p.168

<sup>21</sup> Helen Peate, interviewed 2 September 2005

<sup>22</sup> If Helen is correct on this point, both Looser and Sarah Penney must be incorrect. They claim Fendall's cobb house was built where Quamby Place is now, on the opposite side of Fendalton Road. Looser, p.39; Sarah Penney, *Beyond the City. The Land and its People: Riccarton, Waimairi, Paparua* (Christchurch, 1977), p.66

We had a dinghy, and there was a lot of land down there [by the stream] where we played. My father made whistles for us out of the bamboo... I remember there was a fig tree growing over that [sod wall of Fendall's cottage] but we didn't ever get any ripe figs off it. Down towards the river, there were three walnut trees. I can remember every October Dad would say, 'Right, Saturday morning, ten o'clock', and we'd line up on the veranda and go down to gather walnuts. I think it was October. We had huge wire mesh frames to dry all the walnuts. My mother used to supply all the school fairs, Plunket stalls and everything. My grandmother would come around, and they'd shell them, and put them in little bags to give away for various causes. The garden... had a big laurel hedge along the north border, for part of the way. I can remember my father getting up there, and trimming that once a year. On the south border we had a row of poplar trees, and on the front... there were trees and shrubs... Very thick. I think there was a hedge. My sister remembered a hedge there at one stage, too. But we had a lot of big trees and shrubs, along that frontage, and along the north side of the garden.<sup>23</sup>

Bamboo was growing by the stream, a plant not mentioned by any respondents in Chapter Seven. The garden was surrounded by hedges and large shelter trees and shrubs. An unproductive fig dangled over the old Fendall home, but the attention was focussed on the walnuts, an annual ritual of collecting and cracking that connected the site to the wider community.

Helen asserted next that the

main feature that we can all remember was the big lawn. It was as big as a tennis court, although it didn't have enough run back to actually have it made into a tennis court. But we spent our childhood riding our bicycles round the lawn, and playing on it. Our grandparents came to visit every Sunday, and we performed concerts for them, and held running races and wheel barrow races...<sup>24</sup>

The lawn was a critical component of the garden, and much attention – work and play – was focussed on it.

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<sup>23</sup> Helen Peate, interviewed 2 September 2005

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.





**Figure 39: Helen Peate Riding  
Bicycle on Lawn**  
Source: Home Movie, Peate  
Private Collection



**Figure 40: The Peate girls running  
for the camera, showing lawn,  
shrubby and large trees**  
Source: Home movie, Peate  
Private Collection

However, immediately after this comment, Helen noted that actually the ‘main thing about the garden was the produce that came from it.’ There were two fences of runner beans, as well as peas, potatoes, carrots, onions, cauliflowers, silver beet and an asparagus bed, which ‘would have been about as big as a room in a house. Yes, quite a lot of asparagus.’ Rhubarb was also grown. Fruit included red currants, black currants, gooseberries, strawberries, raspberries, and ‘a lot of fruit trees.’

We had three peach trees, and three plum trees. I can remember some of the plums were purpley plums with a yellow centre. I think they were Blue Diamond. There was also one called Black Doris or something which was a red plum that was rich red all the way through. It was absolutely delicious. We had at least three apple trees as well. One ripened really early, and was called an Irish Peach tree... After the Irish Peach ripened we had Cox’s Orange, and Delicious apples as well. We also had a pear tree, an apricot tree, and a quince tree, too...<sup>25</sup>

A key function of this garden was therefore food production, and, with the large playing lawn, was the most important part of the garden.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

While Helen was sure that it was the edible elements that were the most important aspects, her fondest memories of it relate to its visual and olfactory delights. Like June Stewart, for Helen the garden was a place of intense nostalgia, and again the wisteria triggered particularly significant memories.

[T]he most special thing was the wisteria. We had a beautiful wisteria vine around... the veranda. The veranda looked out onto the lawn to the north-west. I can remember the colour of it. I just loved the loose blossoms and the perfume of it. Whenever I see wisteria now it takes me back. We had a really happy childhood and it reminds me of that. I suppose that's why I'm getting a bit emotional. I also remember a very beautiful magnolia tree. It was outside the kitchen window. It was a special time of year when the magnolia flowered... Another tree that I remember very well was a vanilla tree with tiny dark green leaves. It grew on the edge of the lawn. Whenever I smell the perfume of a vanilla tree, it also takes me back to my childhood. The main tree... Dad was very proud of because he knew its Latin name, *Fontanesia chinensis*! It was a really big tree – as big as those twisted elms – absolutely huge. It had tiny little leaves, almost like a big, huge willow tree. And it dominated the lawn...<sup>26</sup>



**Figure 41: Wisteria and topiary conifer by verandah**  
**Source: Home movie, Peate Private Collection**

The stream frontage possibly featured 'some cabbage trees... and maybe a kowhai', although native plants were not a major part of the garden. Flowers were in formal beds as well as in delightful, secretive hiding places.

We had one big flower bed out beside the house on the north side, outside the kitchen... filled with dahlias. As one of my sisters said 'that ghastly dahlia bed!' Dahlias must have been very popular. The dahlia bed was at least as big as this room. Bigger... Around the edge was a little buxus hedge. On the lawn side of the house there was a gravel path, and we had a flower bed with standard roses. And between the standard roses there were all sorts of different things planted. I can remember at one stage begonias, and some silver-leaved plants. At other times there were hyacinths, grape hyacinths, and freesias, and tulips, and poppies. I can't remember spring flowers, and my sisters and brother didn't remember daffodils at all. On the street side of the house, where there were a lot of shrubs, and trees growing, you'd occasionally find some little violets growing down there. They were lovely, and my

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.



mother really loved the violets. And lily of the valley grew there – it was like a little secret place. It was quite a good hiding place in that front garden. (And there was a tree there that my sister Alison used to favour for her ‘getting away’ tree.) Round by the front door, which was also off Snowdon Road, there was a big gravel area, where cars could park. There were hydrangeas all along that front entrance, lots of big trees along the south border with the other neighbour...<sup>27</sup>

The garden also featured two conifers ‘early on’, on either side of the entrance to the lawn from the verandah, and a holly tree. Scale is what mattered here: the dahlia bed was enormous, the trees were big and there were numerous hiding places throughout, each with different characters. The massive dahlia bed recalls Sanger Holmes’ garden, but on a much larger scale. Dahlias were certainly very fashionable, as evident from the 1940 *Press* report on the centennial dahlia show, which took an entire page.<sup>28</sup> Trees and shrubs bordered the property, they shielded the house from the street. Low front fences were not a requirement here.



**Figure 42: Helen Peate running in front of house, showing formal bedding against the wall**  
Source: Home movie, Peate Private Collection

Both parents had particular roles in the garden, although gardening itself was left to gardeners. ‘I don’t remember any of us actually gardening, and I don’t remember my mother physically putting any plants in, or Dad putting any plants in either. Mum was just gathering it in, and Dad was arranging for somebody to do it.’ Her mother seemed always to be ‘dashing down the garden to pick things. She often bottled the fruit and made jams and jellies... Mum would also salt down the runner beans in big crocks... [W]e had a huge pantry, with shelves and shelves devoted to big jars of preserved fruit.’ Any waste went to a compost heap. Her father trimmed the hedges and mowed the lawns, ‘until my brother was old enough to do it. Nobody thought that the girls might mow the lawns’.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> ‘Centennial Dahlia Show: An Impressive Display’, *The Press*, 8 March 1940



However, two gardeners were required to do most of the work, Mr Hunt and Mr Bird. Mr Hunt – ‘Mum used to call him Silly Hunt’ – was her father’s employee at Scott Bros. foundry. Although ‘not the brightest intellectually’ he was ‘a good hard worker in the garden. There was a lot of digging done, for all the vegetable beds and things, and he was a really hard worker in the garden.’ Mr Bird also worked at her paternal grandmother’s house in Cashmere. The apportionment of the actual garden labour to workers created an entirely different meaning for the garden here to those discussed in Chapter Seven. It was a place of leisure.

I like rambling gardens, which is why I liked things like the wisteria, which just hung, and drooped, and was loose. I don’t like gardens where there’s neat little things, you know, one, two, three, four, five, all lined up. I loved the front part, which was all dark and shady, and secret... The thick shrubs, where the lily of the valley was.<sup>29</sup>

Helen’s perception of this garden was contrary to Brian Gilberthorpe’s reading of such gardens. It certainly had its formal elements, especially the immaculate lawn and the vast dahlia bed, but for Helen the garden’s informality was its special aspect.

Even for large Fendalton gardens compromises were usually required. Pip Middleton’s garden provides a useful comparison in this regard. His family moved into 48 Fendalton Road, otherwise known as Lismore Lodge, in 1944.<sup>30</sup> Again, vegetables figured prominently. A ‘huge’ asparagus bed was already established. ‘We used to go down to Brighton and collect seaweed from the beach and spread it on the asparagus bed, because apparently it liked seaweed.’ Runner beans and broad beans were important. Pip remembered ‘digging trenches for celery and leeks, particularly in the winter’ as a boy. Like Audrey, he said ‘[w]e always had to have peas and new potatoes for Christmas dinner. If they weren’t ready for Christmas it was a national disaster!’ They also grew carrots and parsnips, and forced rhubarb ‘to get it earlier than anybody else’. Jerusalem artichokes were ever-present, an interesting addition not mentioned by any other participants in the study. Salad ingredients were grown as well.

The Middletons also grew a lot of fruit, and Pip’s recollections on this point are instructive:

We had a huge old walnut tree, which was great, and what was really quite rare was a very old mulberry tree. So as a child I always had silkworms, which were a bit special. And apples and pears. The apples were always full of codling moth. We never seemed to ever get on top of that one, you could never just pick an apple off the tree and eat it. You’d probably end up with a moth in your mouth... Fendalton Road also had fig trees... we used to have stewed figs. The house had been built there I

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<sup>29</sup> Helen Peate, interviewed 2 September 2005

<sup>30</sup> Pip Middleton, interviewed 31 August 2005

think it was about 1880, I think some of these things were very old. The walnut tree certainly was huge and very old... Apricots, peaches. Peaches always had curly leaf... The other thing was currants... we always had black currants. We had black currant jelly constantly. Gooseberries we always had. You never see them now... Raspberries we grew too, not with great success. I think the birds got most of them. And cherry trees... the birds always got all the cherries, too. A few of the old gardens used to have complete cages for cherry trees. Huge cages.

M: Where were they?...

P: Well, we never had one, but in other people's big gardens they were particularly. There were some huge gardens along Glandovey Road, well there were big old houses there. And I do remember there being cherry orchards down there. Some of the big old houses in Christchurch really had the most colossal vegetable gardens. What they did with all that stuff- And some of them had almost full time gardeners, doing the garden...<sup>31</sup>

The Middletons hired part time gardeners who came once a week, mostly old men who would help with some of the digging, 'some of the very menial tasks.' This was unskilled garden labour, quite a contrast to the Peate gardeners. Also by way of contrast to the Peate garden, Pip helped as a child. For example, 'the wretched digging of trenches... always... seemed to fall on me... I remember being out with the spade digging these wretched trenches, for celery and leeks, and then, when they'd grown up, you heaped the soil up round to blanch them...' Pip also had his own patch of garden, for fast growing crops like cress and radishes.

In this garden the vegetables were grown by Pip's father; his mother harvested and looked after the flowers. She always 'insisted on having flowers that she could pick, and have in the house.' The flowers were mostly roses, annuals and bulbs. '[S]he was great at planting things like chrysanthemums, and dahlias, and tending roses, and planting sweet peas...' Clearly the garden was decorative. It had 'quite extensive lawns around it', with a large bed of roses fringed with grape hyacinths 'as you came up the drive', apparently a distinctive feature. There was no question of the front garden being untidy:

There was certainly great pride in having your garden looking right, and you certainly didn't want people looking over your front fence and seeing weeds in the front garden... And lawns were always beautifully cut, and the edges trimmed. Definite pride... Christchurch had beautifying societies, and street competitions... So if you let the street down, well, it was worse than death!<sup>32</sup>

The beautification trope was powerful indeed. However, the beauty of this part of the garden had more than one meaning. It had been laid out on top of what had been a large vegetable garden planted out during the war. This is the only instance in which any of my participants

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

specifically mentioned a change in gardening practice due to the war time situation. 'It was war-time, and people were very keen to provide vegetables all year round... [T]he whole front garden had been dug, [the] lawn had been dug up and planted in vegetables, simply because of the war.' Returning the garden to lawn and putting in a very formal rose garden indicated a conspicuous consumption, just as the prominent vegetable garden seems to have been setting an example.

The war induced other gardening changes for the Middletons as well. Specifically, composting practice changed. There had always been a compost heap in previous gardens, but from 1944 Pip's father 'got really quite technical... and mixed up a brew of herbal substances which he poured into the compost, supposed to make it rot in half the time. I don't know that it ever did, but it gave him great satisfaction... I seem to remember one had stinging nettle juice in it.' The compost heap was always very important. 'Compost heaps as I remember them were usually packing cases, which eventually rotted and had to be replaced', he said, precisely the system described by Judith Todd. However, an apparently more robust alternative was to use 'cut down tanks... [T]here was no high-pressure water and everybody had large tanks, and these eventually rusted through, and [you] had an old tank, which you then used as a compost heap. It was quite something: that was up market.' As for making the compost:

It was done really quite scientifically. You put the grass clippings in, but you mixed them up with a bit of soil, you didn't just simply throw everything in, it was all done in layers, and quite carefully done. No potato peelings, because they would grow, and tomatoes were frowned upon a bit too, because they also grew. And there was a great performance of digging it out, and usually you'd end up by putting compost in the bottom of the celery trench. Well, by the time you'd dug your celery trench a foot deep, and another foot deep for compost, you got down into the subsoil. A huge physical task to do that. Most of it was just spread around and forked in. As soon as it had got to the stage where it was rotten enough.<sup>33</sup>

Although 'up market', there is something surprisingly makeshift about this composting system. The technical interest of Pip's father in compost making reveals the influence of the Compost Club, even if it was not mentioned by name. Compost making did not denote a chemical-free garden: 'lethal' sprays were also used after the war, such as Black Leaf 40 – a nicotine spray Pip's father applied to carrots.

By contrast to this large garden, Rayna Wootton's family shifted from the Avon Loop to 119 Jeffreys Road, part of the original 'Bryndwr' farm, towards the end of 1947 after her father

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

returned from the war.<sup>34</sup> The street was notable for its state housing, part of the Government's 'pepper-potting' program of intermixing housing types.<sup>35</sup> At that time the garden was in a poor condition. This was a more 'ordinary' garden, with a flower garden and lawn at the front and fruit and vegetables at the back.

[W]e had a large vegetable garden, and several fruit trees, but we also had lots of flowers as well. And there were particular things, in terms of flowers that my father grew, and they were dahlias, gladioli, and carnations... But I think that could have arisen because my mother's father, that was one of his specialities, growing carnations... There was a live hedge right down one side that was... at least six foot high, which was a privet. On the other side, I don't know what sort of hedge it was, it was different. That was almost right down the other side, and then there were two little privet hedges that divided the back of the house section of our flower... garden from the rest of the section.<sup>36</sup>

Her father also grew large bunches of sweet peas that her mother put inside: 'Flowers that had a smell were very popular in our house.'

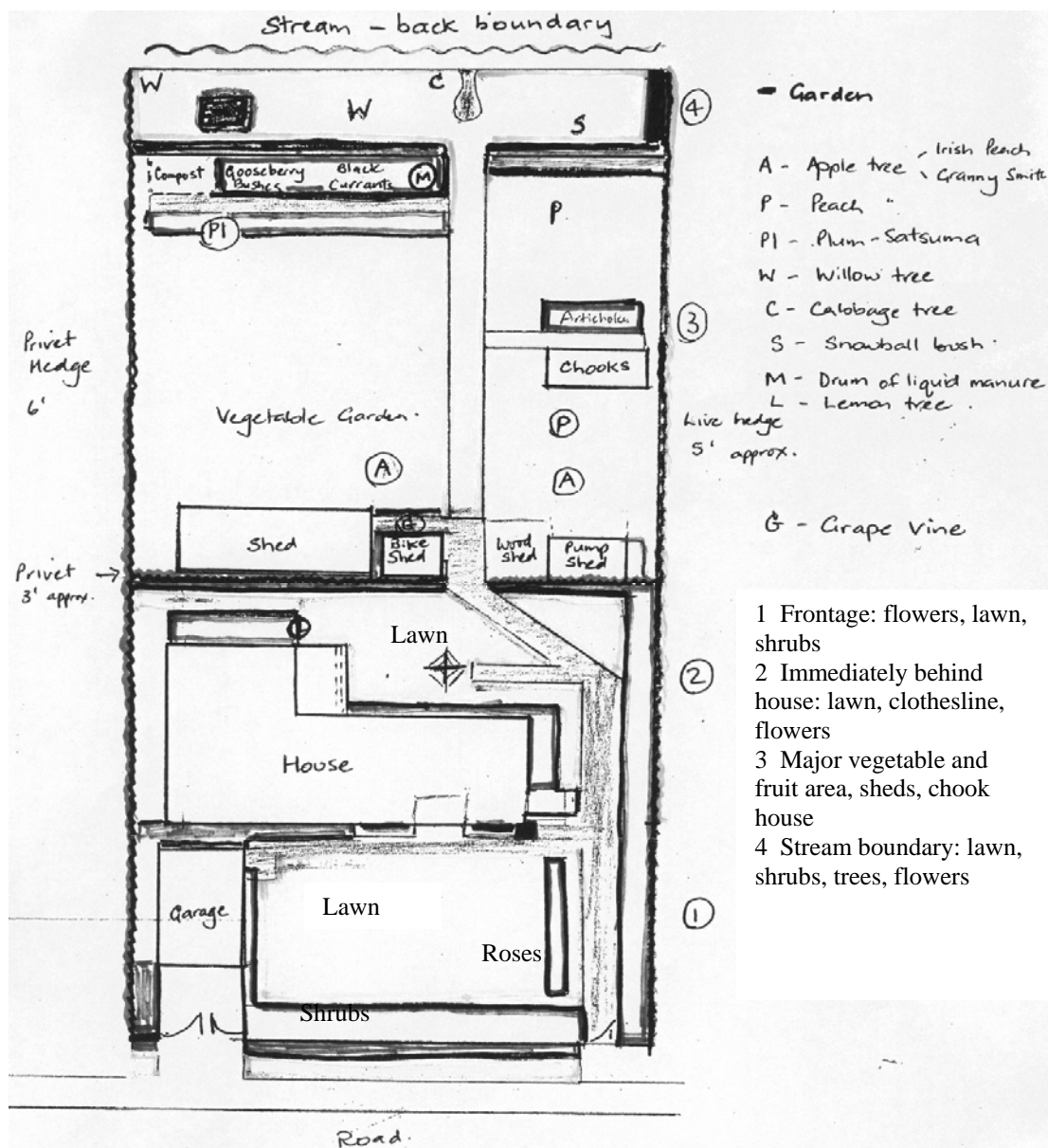
Figure 43 is a plan of the garden, drawn by Rayna. It shows the massive size of the vegetable garden even in this post-war period – it is larger than the house. In addition, the plan and its associated explanatory notes throw considerable light on precisely what was grown.

Rayna remembered her garden having four distinct sections: the frontage, the area immediately behind the house, the major vegetable and fruit area, and the stream boundary. The frontage began outside the front fence, with a lawn, and garden plot in begonias. Within the property boundary, a forsythia stood by the small gate. Other shrubs in the area included cotoneaster, camellia, photinia and a bottle brush. By the hedge stood a pieris. Along the side fence were a climbing rose, and standard and bush roses in a narrow garden bordering the path. In the gardens bordering the front lawn were dahlias, gladioli, hydrangeas, peonies, bleeding heart, antirrhinum, stocks, lachenalia, lily of the valley, pyrethrum, alyssum, lobelia, variegated geranium, begonias, marigolds, *Centaurus candidissima*, salvia, zinnia, and candytuft watsonia. Along the side of the house stood a large cactus, an abutilon, freesias and lavender. Figures 44 and 45 give two views of the front garden, facing towards the street. The

<sup>34</sup> Rayna Wootton, interviewed 15 September 2005

<sup>35</sup> Looser, 197; Ben Schrader, *We Call it Home: A History of State Housing in New Zealand* (Auckland, 2005) p.62

<sup>36</sup> Rayna Wootton, interviewed 15 September 2005



**Figure 43: Plan of 119 Jeffreys Road, drawn by Rayna Wootton**  
**Source: Rayna Wootton Private Collection**

first of these images highlights the openness of the garden to Jeffrey's Road, replicated on the other side of the street. Low growing plants and a very low fence line are in evidence. It also highlights the tidiness of the garden. The lawn is perfectly trimmed, and the borders perfectly delineated. The second image shows how even this style of garden could provide some privacy. Taller plants might also be allowed into the front border. Again, the same is true of the garden over the road. Any sense of privacy could only be accessed by sitting down beside these taller shrubs.



**Figure 44: 119  
Jeffreys Road,  
looking out to the  
street  
Source: Rayna  
Wootton Private  
Collection**



**Figure 45: 119  
Jeffreys Road, Ranya  
(right) with her  
siblings on front lawn  
Source: Rayna  
Wootton Private  
Collection**

The second area, that immediately behind the house, was equally decorative, though it also contained the washing line. Along the house grew a fuchsia and arum lilies, as well as unidentified orange flowers. There were also sweetpeas, a children's cactus garden, gerberas, a rose, a Meyer lemon and two lilacs. The cacti in the front and in this part are an interesting oddity not found in the other gardens described. Gypsophila, ixia, gazania, gaillardia and geraniums also figured here. By the pump shed were silene, primulas, violets and auricula. Another garden, beside a hedge, contained a Chinese lantern, lavender, chrysanthemums, gladioli, sparaxis, watsonia, iris, obedience, carnations, stachys, pinks, phlox, nerines, Michelmas daisies, Livingston daisies, coral, and London's Pride. This area, apparently functional, was in fact highly decorative. The entire house, therefore, was surrounded by well kept, colourful, and unusually textured plants.

The third part of the property was completely different, and was segregated by outbuildings and small hedges from the front. It was entirely for provisioning and appears to have been out

of view of the house. This area, which Rayna labelled as the major vegetable and fruit area, contained Irish Peach and Granny Smith apples, peaches, Satsuma plums, a grape vine, rhubarb, pie melons, gooseberries, blackcurrants, and originally raspberries. Vegetables produced were Ilam Hardy, Glen Ilam and Catriona potatoes, cabbage, spinach, cauliflower, parsnips, turnips, pumpkins, artichokes, beetroot, tomatoes, radish, mint, chives and sage. Scarlet runner beans grew on a bean fence; dwarf beans were also grown. Earlycrop carrots, Pukekohe Longkeeper and Brown Spanish onions, William Massey and Greenfeast peas, and Great Lakes lettuce were all produced. Yet carnations and gladioli were also grown in the vegetable garden, as were Prince of Wales Feathers. A school garden was marked out as well. The compost heap and a drum of liquid manure flanked the berries.

Finally, the fourth section had a different character yet again, and was defined by the stream. 'It was a lovely stream, really, because it had a sandy bottom. There were trout in it, earlier on, anyway... Watercress grew in it.' Two willows created a sense of adventure and tranquillity; one had a swing, and one hung over the stream and could be climbed. A cabbage tree grew there as well, right on the stream edge.<sup>37</sup> Amongst these were a snowball bush, a forsythia, more roses, a japonica, annuals and the lawn.

Aside from the discreteness of these garden parts, the most striking aspect of this account is the level of detail provided about plants. This is the knowledge of an actual gardener. Much of this knowledge derived from the school garden work, which was supervised by her father. 'I suppose it was a matter of pride for him, too, to... look after the garden, and that it would be judged to be a good garden'. The school garden project certainly demanded that children pay attention to all aspects of gardening. Many of my interviewees produced certificates celebrating their participation in the school garden programme; Rayna also produced diaries, which add detail to the process of inter-generational knowledge transfer about gardening. 'Dad dug over my garden',<sup>38</sup> 'When I planted seeds Dad put string with paper on to protect them from birds',<sup>39</sup> 'May have to dig up my potato plants as they have a disease which may spread to Dad's tomatoes',<sup>40</sup> 'Dad suggested that I plant peas for Easter. Where the potatoes were I planted William Massey',<sup>41</sup> 'Dad thought that the soil was not rich enough for tomatoes',<sup>42</sup> 'Dad put about 2 drops of kerosene in a tin and swirled the peas around in it.

<sup>37</sup> Rayna Wootton, interviewed 15 September 2005

<sup>38</sup> Rayna Wootton, 'Garden Book, 1953', September 1953, *RW*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 September 1953, *RW*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 November 1953, *RW*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 January 1954, *RW*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 February 1954, *RW*

This gives them a coat and protects them from the birds'.<sup>43</sup> Although this sort of passing on of gardening knowledge is similar in the Riccarton accounts, it is quite different from many of the recollections from Fendalton.

While her father stands out as being very knowledgeable about pest control, soil fertility and crop regimes, Rayna never mentioned her mother in these diaries. Rayna's father was indeed the gardener of the household.

... at the time it was the husband's responsibility to do the garden, and so that although my mother might have helped a little bit in the flower garden, she was allowed to, but I can remember my father saying once, 'who's been scratching around in the front garden?' ... [M]ainly it was my father...<sup>44</sup>

As with other gardens in this chapter, gender roles, so flexible in Riccarton, seemed more rigid in Fendalton.

Other gardens nearby were of a similar type. One garden over the road originally had big willow trees growing at the front, with a lawn, and a smaller vegetable garden.

The house next door to that actually, though, the man had a very good vegetable garden, and also a very good flower garden... On the left side there were several lots of changes of people in there, and it was similar to ours, with lawn in the front, and shrubs, and flowers, and the back was similar too, but I don't think it was as intensive, for example in terms of a vegetable garden, as ours.<sup>45</sup>

Rayna also noted that because people walked more, or rode bicycles, 'you noticed what was in people's gardens, and if they saw something that grew well in your garden, it might grow well in theirs, for example, like the forsythia bushes that appeared round about'. This is an outward looking view of the garden, quite different from the Peate garden. While retaining access to a stream as the perfect Fendalton garden ought, the plan of the garden and its description show it to be open to the street, highly regimented and segregated, and labour intensive for the householders themselves. At the same time this garden was connected to those around it in terms of form and content; apart from cuttings being shared within the immediate family, influences were gained by the experiments of neighbours.

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<sup>43</sup> Wootton, 'Year 1954', 25 September 1954, *RW*

<sup>44</sup> Wootton, interviewed 15 September 2005, *RW*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, *RW*



Further north still, and away from the homes of true Fendalton, the gardens were different again. Gillian Creighton was born into 416 Ilam Road in 1942.<sup>46</sup> The property there was a quarter acre, broken in with potatoes. It is a good contrast to the Wootton garden in many respects, although the preponderance of trees mark it out as being Fendaltonian. Her mother planted an English beech, a strawberry tree, an unidentified malus with copper leaves, a spindleberry tree, a maple, a *Prunus kanzan* as well as a pink bottlebrush. There was also a vanilla tree, so evocative for Helen Peate, and a ribbonwood. Whereas in Riccarton a quarter acre was considered too small for trees, this garden delighted in them. Gillian's sister believed their mother preferred trees to flowers.<sup>47</sup>

Also in the garden were several standard roses including 'Shot Silk' and 'Ena Harkness', and a pale lemon climbing rose. Pink japonica was grown as a hedge. Also grown were stylosis, peonies, gypsophilla, anchusa, blue agapanthus, michelmas daisies, pink phlox, hydrangeas, and some narcissi. Grape hyacinths edged the front garden. Beneath the standard roses were grown a variety of annuals, such as polyanthus, geraniums, petunias, marigolds, Sweet William, stocks and wallflowers. Some of these were not strictly annuals, but they were grown as such, in an ever changing display of colour.<sup>48</sup> Other flowering plants in the front garden, along the eastern fence included Solomons Seal, bleeding heart, aquilegia and violets. A forsythia and two lilacs stood in the front garden.<sup>49</sup> These flowers were only at the front of the house. Gillian suggests that '[p]resumably this means they were meant to be seen from the street from where they were visible,' although neither she nor her sister know whether this was important to their mother.<sup>50</sup> However, beautification was again an important consideration in this garden.

Fruit was a major feature. A walnut, five apples and a nectarine were all behind the house<sup>51</sup> as were approximately four each of gooseberry bushes and blackcurrants. The children picked the fruit each year for their mother to make jam.<sup>52</sup> Gillian's father also established a vegetable garden, although this seems not to have lasted for very long.<sup>53</sup> Increased work commitments reduced the time available to him.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Gillian Creighton to Matt Morris, email, 17 August 2005

<sup>47</sup> Gillian Creighton to Matt Morris, email, 11 January 2006

<sup>48</sup> Gillian Creighton to Matt Morris, email, 17 August 2005

<sup>49</sup> Gillian Creighton to Matt Morris, email, 11 January 2006

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Gillian Creighton to Matt Morris, email, 17 August 2005

<sup>52</sup> Gillian Creighton to Matt Morris, email, 18 August 2005

<sup>53</sup> Gillian Creighton to Matt Morris, email, 17 August 2005

<sup>54</sup> Gillian Creighton to Matt Morris, email, 11 January 2006

That it was the mother who shopped for plants and established trees again disturbs the too-simple generalisations about the garden as a gendered space. Nevertheless, mowing the 'front lawn' was definitely Gillian's father's job. Later, in keeping with other accounts, this task passed to the children once they were old enough.<sup>55</sup> Up to 1954 the family had a hand push mower. Later they bought a twenty-inch Morrison motor mower.<sup>56</sup> Once the vegetable garden was abandoned, it was put into more lawn to accommodate the playing equipment. Maintaining the garden in the 'proper' way did not greatly affect the maintenance of this garden on Fendalton's edge.

Gillian's garden was on the north-west periphery of the Fendalton area. To take another extremity of the area, Dorothy Fee's family moved to the southeastern periphery of RS 18<sup>57</sup> in approximately 1935, to Park Lane (originally Hagley Lane, and Wood Lane since 1949).<sup>58</sup> She had been raised in St Albans, on Bealey Street (now Champion Street). There, her father's vegetable garden had been vitally important, a point she attributed to the Depression. Cherry trees and apples also stood in their garden, establishing a particular continuity between sites; the person who pruned the apples in Bealey Street continued pruning them in Park Lane. Dorothy's great aunt and great uncle lived in Park Lane. Her father, William Archibald Smellie Smith,<sup>59</sup> demolished the lodge there in approximately 1951. The aunt and uncle also bought Mona Vale, an icon of Fendalton, while still retaining the lodge. After living with them for some time, Dorothy's parents bought number 1 Park Lane in either 1947 or 1948. This home warrants a mention in Vicky Heward's *Heritage Christchurch Houses*, although it is disappointingly brief.<sup>60</sup> Each of these properties was a large section. After a brief spell from 1949 at Ilam Road with her new husband, Wray, Dorothy and he moved to Holmwood Road in 1952.

At 3 Park Lane the property was slightly more than half an acre. It had first been sold in 1889, and had been owned by Dorothy's aunt between 1910 and 1921.<sup>61</sup> There, Dorothy's father continued growing vegetables. 'We had a big vegetable garden then, and he was a professional person... and yet, whenever he came home from work, the first thing he ever did was to [go] out with the hoe... and hoe away between the rows of his vegetables.' This urge apparently came from his own father, and was passed onto his eldest son who 'carried on with

<sup>55</sup> Gillian Creighton to Matt Morris, email, 17 August 2005

<sup>56</sup> Gillian's brother believed the motor mower arrived earlier, but her sister is certain it was later. Although her brother ended up mowing the lawns, he was still only ten in 1954, so the later date is probably more accurate. Gillian Creighton to Matt Morris, email, 11 January 2006

<sup>57</sup> Looser, p.21

<sup>58</sup> Dorothy and Wray Fee, interviewed 24 August 2005

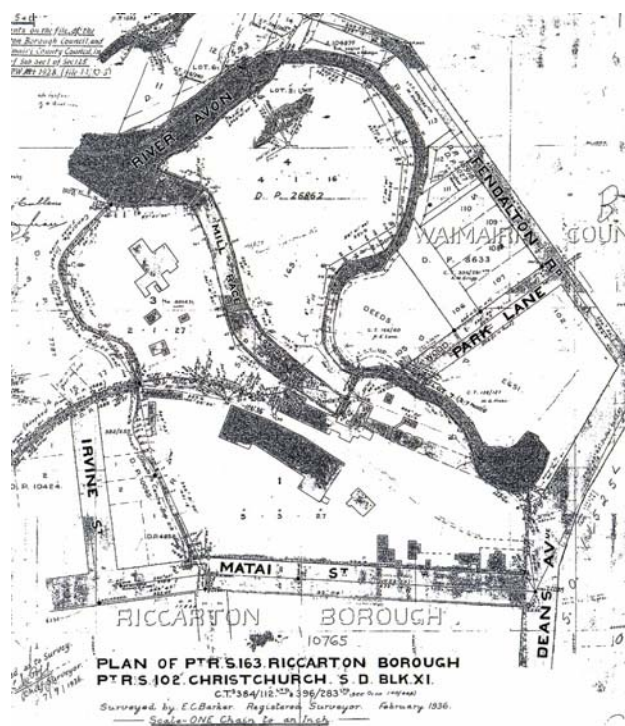
<sup>59</sup> Dorothy Fee to Matt Morris, email, 15 December 2005

<sup>60</sup> Vicky Heward, 'Number One Wood Lane', *Heritage Christchurch Houses* (Christchurch, 2004)

<sup>61</sup> Certificate of Title 138/127, LINZ

the vegetable garden after Dad... started giving it up a bit. It was always very, very important to have the vegetables, fresh vegetables'. Her father planted grafted apple trees there: one was a Delicious and Golden Delicious, another Ballarat Seedling, Granny Smith and Cox's Orange.<sup>62</sup>

Trees were prominent in this garden, which extended down to the Avon River and looked out onto the gardens of Fleming's Flour Mill (now Christchurch Girls' High School) on the other side (see Figure 46). '[R]ight around the perimeter of the place on the river side, there were a lot of trees.' As erosion from the Mill took effect, many of these trees were left standing in the river. A Turkey oak and a copper beech were 'glorious' and 'brilliant'. Her mother did not love all the trees, however. 'In the middle of one of the lawns, [which] was terraced down to the river... [was] a huge big conifer. My mother didn't like it a bit, because all the stuff kept falling down off it... and Mum put a match to this tree which she didn't like. And it was high, it was a big one!' As in the Peate garden, the conifer suffered. Similarly, an enormous walnut overshadowed the Avon Lodge, blocking the sun as well as attracting rats from the river. The family cut it down, leaving a stump with a huge circumference.



**Figure 46: DP 10765, Subdivision of RS 163, 1936, showing Park Lane, later Wood Lane**  
Source: LINZ

It is significant that in dealing with the protruding walnut stump the family chose to develop a rock garden. 'I remember the rocks put round it. And it was made into about three [levels], circle of rocks, and then some garden, another circle of rocks, probably to make it more of a

<sup>62</sup> Dorothy Fee to Matt Morris, email, 15 January 2006

mound... to allow for the shape of the tree when it was cut down...'. This was obviously a radical change in the garden, and influenced by the fashions of the day outlined for example by Helen Leach<sup>63</sup> and the garden literatures explored in Chapter Four.

3 Park Lane also had a glasshouse, and this was the province of Dorothy's mother. 'She had flowers and things in there.' Like many other mothers mentioned so far, Dorothy's mother concerned herself with the bottling of fruit from the garden.

By the time the family moved into 1 Park Lane, next door, circumstances had changed somewhat. The property here was larger, more than three quarters of an acre,<sup>64</sup> and was divided from number 3 by a tall macrocarpa hedge. Help in the garden from number 3, as well as the services of the Head Gardener at Mona Vale (Mr. Druitt), made garden labour easier for Dorothy's father. Vegetables were still important, although the vegetable garden itself was smaller. Dorothy remembered standing in the garden and peeling back the outer husks of sweet corn 'to get at the silky bit', suggesting a readiness to adaptation; sweet corn would have been a new introduction at this time. There were also two asparagus beds. While Druitt apparently cared for most of the garden, it was Dorothy's father who 'used to always go and throw salt all over' the asparagus beds. 'It was an annual event that the salt went on the asparagus beds.' 'And I can recall getting... sea weed from... Brighton... [and] you'd bring some home, and that was always thrown on the asparagus bed.' The same had been true for the Middleton garden. There was also a 'very old' cherry plum and an old pear.<sup>65</sup>

I asked Dorothy about gardening during the war, and whether there was much interest in growing vegetables at that time. She confirmed that there was – 'It was very much encouraged' – and went on to note her father's interest in potato growing. When coming back to the topic again I asked if she had meant vegetable growing had been 'very much encouraged' during the war. Her answer again follows the general trend noted in this thesis:

No, no... everybody used to have their vegetable gardens, and if anybody came to call it was nothing if they happened to have a cabbage under their arm or in the car, ... because you're so proud of your vegetables too, everyone was proud of their vegetables.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Helen Leach, 'Exotic Natives and Contrived Wild Gardens: The Twentieth Century Home Garden', in Eric Pawson and Tom Brooking (eds), *Environmental Histories of New Zealand* (Melbourne, 2002), pp.221-2

<sup>64</sup> Certificate of Title, 178/24, LINZ

<sup>65</sup> Dorothy Fee to Matt Morris, email, 15 January 2006

<sup>66</sup> Dorothy and Wray Fee, interviewed 24 August 2005

As noted earlier in Dorothy's account, the Depression had made a major impact, but during the war vegetable gardening was nothing new. Here, too, is an example of the role homegrown produce could play in social rituals; it was part of an economy of generosity.<sup>67</sup>

Beauty did figure in the Park Lane gardens, nevertheless. Apart from the tall trees and the sweeping lawns down to the stream, there was a large rose bed formally set apart with ornamental chains, tended by Druitt. The other gardener from number 3 mowed the lawn.<sup>68</sup> Whereas number 3 had a croquet lawn, number 1 had a tennis court.

Like Mona Vale, Greystones, at the corner of Idris and Glandovey Roads, is an iconic Christchurch garden. It showed up in Chapter Three as the most significant of the gardens entered in the Canterbury Horticultural Society's home garden competitions. Designed by his business partner Hugh Hamilton in 1920, the house was built by Albert Paynter in 1926,<sup>69</sup> according to his grandson Selwyn Paynter the property was given to Albert as payment for a building contract.<sup>70</sup> Albert established Paynter and Hamilton Ltd, the building company, with his wife's family. Warren Duncan, another of Albert's grandsons, lived at Greystones briefly in c1948<sup>71</sup> and visited it regularly.<sup>72</sup> '... [W]e thoroughly enjoyed that garden, mainly [as] a big area to play in'. The garden backed onto the Wairarapa Stream, and was spacious, with specimen trees, immaculate lawns, rose beds and a tennis court.

The trees of note were a copper beech (*Fagus sylvatica* f. *purpurea*) and weeping elms, both of which were beautiful, but neither of which were much use for climbing. These stood in the lawn on the Glandovey Road side of the property. Towards the stream, on the other side, there were no trees apart from fruit trees. Specifically, there were no willows growing along the stream. Vegetables were produced nearby, in terraced gardens 'between the level of the tennis court... and stepping down to [almost] meet the river level.'<sup>73</sup> At the far end of the plot were currant bushes. Cut into the lawn, which was always verdant, were 'pretty big' geometric rose beds, underplanted in annuals. 'I can remember all the edges... with the lovely sloping earth face, with the clipper... business around the edges to keep it sharp.' Around the garden, Warren remembers primarily 'English-type' plants, such as azaleas, and hydrangeas which grew along the stream.

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<sup>67</sup> The concept is developed further by Katherine Peet and John Peet, 'Stolen From Future Generations? The Need to Move to a Political Economy of Generosity' (Australia New Zealand Third Sector Research conference, Unitech, Auckland, 2002)

<sup>68</sup> Dorothy and Wray Fee, interviewed 24 August 2005

<sup>69</sup> Heward, 'Greystones'

<sup>70</sup> Selwyn Paynter, interviewed 8 November 2005

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Warren Duncan, interviewed 19 December 2005

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

However, one important feature of the garden was the fernery, which was in a raised bed between the house and the stream, beyond the washhouse. 'I suppose an area not much different from the size of an average lounge, really, and it was just full of ferns.'<sup>74</sup> This particular feature, which would have been considered fashionable (though not, according to the data examined in Chapter Six, widely replicated) when the garden was first developed, seems quite unusual for the late 1940s. Another special feature of the garden was the drive-in entrance, in clean, regularly raked gravel, with a garden 'that you drove around in the middle'. This round garden was raised, and ringed with rocks similar to those the house was built of, probably Halswell Quarry stone. Warren recalls roses in this garden; Selwyn remembers the plantings changing regularly, though this would have been at a later date.<sup>75</sup>

As with some of the other gardens mentioned in this chapter, Albert mowed his own lawn, and did so with state of the art technology:

His motor mower was just about big enough to put a trolley on behind. It was an ACTO mower... Big green machine with a big heavy engine on the front of it. It was a reel mower, obviously no rotocuts in those days. But just beyond that I can't remember whether he had a roller rider on the back with a seat on it, but I imagine he did... I would have probably thought it would have had a twenty-four inch cut, maybe a thirty inch cut, which in those days was quite significant. But it would have been a big four stroke motor. It wasn't a two stroke, it was a four stroke... It was a big machine... It wasn't like a domestic mower that you'd have today. It was much bigger.<sup>76</sup>

The lawns were an essential part of this garden, and this massive lawn mower distinguishes it in every way from the gardens outside of Fendalton. These lawns were always 'manicured down to, we're talking millimetres in height'. Nevertheless, they did suffer from hydrocotyl, especially down by the stream.

Paynter and Hamilton also built the house Warren's mother lived in, on the corner of Stratford Street and Idris Road, one block to the south of Greystones.<sup>77</sup> This area was first subdivided in 1905.<sup>78</sup> In 1949, Alison Helm and her husband moved into this property of three quarters of an acre which, according to Alison, 'had the basics. It had the trees', which included a holly, a 'magnificent magnolia', camellias, and 'two or three silver birches'.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Selwyn Paynter, interviewed 8 November 2005

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Warren Duncan, pers. comm., 23 January 2006

<sup>78</sup> Looser, p.158

<sup>79</sup> Alison Helm, interviewed 5 December 2005

Alison's husband cut the birches down. Like Greystones, the garden also featured a weeping elm, which was 'right on the corner'. The lawn was old by this time, and needed to be replanted. Just as the central garden in the driveway at Greystones was lined with rocks, so too was the path at Stratford Street. Alison referred to them as 'those horrible stones', which she removed. Alison and her husband therefore modified what to them seemed an out-of-date garden.

In doing so it was the lawn that apparently took the most effort. It was planted in potatoes to alter the soil structure and make it more friable.<sup>80</sup> After the potatoes, the lawn was re-established. However, the pair wrought a more substantial change in the shape of the lawn and its interaction with the garden borders. It seems that, just as the Paynters preferred geometric, razor sharp edges, so too did the Hamiltons. Alison changed the straight lines of the garden to graceful curves. 'I never planned on paper like some people do. I did layouts with a hose, if we wanted to alter a path which was horribly straight and went in the wrong direction, and borders which we made rather attractive. Not too curly, but just attractive borders.' She believed that 'people in those days were very keen to have replica British herbaceous borders, so we were still frightfully British...' The straightness of borders in the garden was one marker of this. As with many other interviewees in this chapter, Alison 'couldn't stand things in rows... I wanted things in clumps, and clusters, and that's what you could do with a herbaceous border.' The idea, according to Alison, was to produce height at the back with foxgloves, delphiniums, 'or something really lovely up the back', with clumps of colourful plants in front. 'And then if you wanted to do your silly little things in front, you could. Little rows of things.' But, while there might be rows – and this was apparently the predilection of husbands – informality 'is the word. You want it to be informal but attractive to the eye, especially with colour. Herbaceous borders can be really lovely, but they weren't like the English ones... English herbaceous borders are very, very, very, very lovely... ours aren't as good.'<sup>81</sup>

It is hard not to see the influence of English painter turned gardener Gertrude Jekyll in such thinking, where carefully designed borders looked informal. Indeed, according to Anne Scott-James, herbaceous borders were 'Miss Jekyll's speciality'.<sup>82</sup> The importance of colour, too, is a noteworthy Jekyll influence. For Alison the focus was on making the border *colourful* – that is, using flowers – whereas for Jekyll 'painterly' monochromatic borders utilising unusual foliage types were the goal. Nevertheless, here, with the creation of a newly planted and

<sup>80</sup> Gillian Creighton remarked on the same process, as did Dorothy and Wray Fee.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Anne Scott-James, *Sissinghurst: The Making of a Garden* (London, 1975), p.41

shaped lawn and redesigned borders, Alison acknowledged both the need to move away from what she perceived as the British influence, and the impossibility in a comparatively small section of capturing the loveliest aspects of 'British horticulture'. It needed modification in the colonial garden. This did not mean using natives, although Alison did plant a native fuchsia and hebes amongst the other plants. It meant a certain relaxation of the rules established by the British designers.

Her husband, who had a tendency towards planting things in rows, also 'grew a lovely veggie patch' of almost twenty perches in size, which included fruit and picking flowers as had the Wootton garden.

Veggies were lovely, when I look back on them. There was sweet corn, there was an asparagus bed. There were fruity things down in the bottom of the garden, gooseberries and raspberries and all of that. And then there were all these other lovely green things that we grew, silverbeet and spuds and everything, and peas for Christmas.<sup>83</sup>

The layout, and even the content, of this garden appears to be precisely the same as that of other gardens noted in this chapter. The asparagus bed was established by Alison's husband.

I don't know what he did, he did all the right things because the asparagus was magnificent. I think it was to do with drainage and soil, and cutting out the berried asparagus that you let grow... That was wonderful to go and pick your own asparagus. It was quite a long bed. It was about as long as this room, I suppose.<sup>84</sup>

Later, with her husband's increasingly poor health, the vegetable patch was sold off. The garden also had a very old Burbank plum, and a pear tree.

Aside from the vegetables, the dahlias were the garden's most important crop.

And the other thing I grew down in the veggie patch was dahlias, because they were my pet hobby, dahlias, I loved dahlias, and I had this huge patch – about as big as this room I suppose – of dahlias. In those days, a lot of us that were gardeners, belonged to specialist societies, so I belonged to the dahlia society. And that meant that we had to show them. Well, I did and it was fun while it lasted. It was really exciting to grow something that you could take along and pop it in the thing and get a red ticket by it. But it meant to keep them in good nick, to protect them from the weather, I had to put umbrellas up on posts to shelter them from the wind and rain and the sun. So they looked really rather funny in the back of the veggie patch with the umbrellas all popping up.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Alison Helm, interviewed 5 December 2005

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.



Dahlias, along with roses and carnations, have featured in many of the gardens of this chapter and the last. Often they were grown by men, but not always. Like gladioli, the fact that dahlias could be grown in the vegetable patch as a crop suggests not only a delight in the flower itself, but also a particular kind of perfectibility or cultivation. They had a use-value, as flowers for the house or for friends, or for competition.

While Alison tended the dahlias, as well as ‘the front bit, all the flowery part’, her husband’s jobs, other than growing vegetables, were path-making, compost-making, trimming the ‘dreadful, dreadful’ laurel hedge, and mowing the lawn. Once more, however, while this was the rule, in fact he died early on. Thereafter their eldest son used the two-stroke mower and, presumably, assisted with other garden work as well.

Alison’s case is particularly interesting for Fendalton in the late 1940s and 1950s because in c1953 she started what became known as the Stratford Gardening Club, slightly earlier than when Maurice Staunton started the Upper Riccarton Garden Club. She had tried to join one of the very many gardening clubs in Christchurch, but they were all oversubscribed, or else had erected certain social barriers, ‘So I thought blow this, I’ll start one myself’. It was from the club that Alison learned most of her gardening skills.

That was the main learning place. Because at a garden club you have a speaker, and you have different subjects, and you can choose your programme for the year... There were subjects there that we wanted to learn about. Wonderful speakers. Mostly came through the Horticultural Society... But that’s how we learned individual, specialist subjects, I suppose. We even learned how to make compost, all sorts of interesting things. Fascinating.<sup>86</sup>

*The New Zealand Gardener* and specialist gardening societies were also important influences. The Canterbury Horticultural Society figured as well, and not just as a source of speakers for Stratford.

[W]e were all members of the Horticultural Society. Very stuffy outfit run by a lot of bureaucratic old men. Better now, because some women have come in. But they were very, very rigid and very stuffy. They thought us girls weren’t quite as capable as they were, of gardening. But we managed. We had women’s outfits on the Horticultural Society. Christchurch has always had a wonderful Horticultural Society, and as I said before you can learn any specialty. They’ve got every specialist society you can think. Rock gardens, everything.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

While the focus of the meetings was the speaker, much of the actual learning effect seemed to be obtained through discussion with other experimenting gardeners, and visits to country gardens.

The Stratford club was essentially a women's organisation, although they did run evenings targeted at their husbands, such as the compost evening. The speaker at this meeting was Jack Humm, noted in Chapter Five as a cautious compost advocate, anxious in the early 1940s to avoid the spread of contagion through poorly made heaps. The aim for the Club, however, was to 'excite our husbands to make good compost', which seemed to have the desired effect.

Alison had also touched on rock gardens, another fad that she experimented with in her garden, but to little effect.

Oh, God! I tried to make one, but it wasn't really as successful as it should have been because it was quite heavy... I learnt this at the garden club, you know how you make sure the rocks are so much deeper, so you don't have a great big hump sticking upwards and all that nonsense. But you have to grow really specialised little rock plants, and they were so tiny that I was apt to lose them. They'd get lost. No, I didn't really have a good rock garden.<sup>88</sup>

Rock work, much promoted, did not suit all gardeners and all sites.

I tried to build a rock wall once, but that wasn't very successful. There was an ideal place for a rock wall, but it was very difficult. You know... those lovely rock walls where you have things coming out. See, that would belong on the Cashmere Hills, that's the place for a rock wall, and that didn't work...<sup>89</sup>

While the garden clubs might stimulate discussion and even experimentation, ultimately they could not have an enormous influence over the designs and uses of gardens. Personality and site conditions mattered more.

Finally, Alison commented not only on the desired informality of gardens, but also on the great *formality* of gardens in particular parts of the city. Section sizes were important here – Fendalton gardens were large enough for informality, and the smaller gardens of Spreydon, for example, required more discipline – but size was not the only factor.

Sure, they'd have a lovely veggie patch at the back most probably. But the gardens are so, so formal, sort of straight lines. I think they were a bit frightened of trying something different, or something new. But... I had a great advantage, because I had

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

this lovely area, where the big lawn, and trees were all ready, and I could do what I liked. But you couldn't do that on a small patch. Yes, there is a very great difference in the gardens in different areas in Christchurch... Isn't that interesting? Well, I wondered if it was to do with people... And if you're a very fussy little lady that likes everything straight and clean and tidy, you'll make that sort of garden. I'm not dirty and untidy!<sup>90</sup>

This perspective fits very well with the findings of Chapter Seven, in which the small gardens south of Riccarton Road seemed to censor their gardening work and ensure its exposure to the street for public scrutiny, unless they self-identified as political radicals. Conversely, large gardens tended to be hidden behind laurel hedges and captured a charming informality.

## Conclusions

Chapter Seven noted an important differentiation between gardens to the north and south of Riccarton Road. This was apparently a social differentiation, and not simply a matter of section size. That chapter also noted the effect of environment on gardening in the area. Wide variation in soil types, but especially the prevalence of heavy soils, was a major consideration for gardeners. So too was the long-standing effect of the kahikatea forest. Trees featured close to Riccarton Bush, but further south there were few. Gardeners adopted new technologies to maintain gardens to acceptable standards of tidiness, but the technology was often makeshift. Likewise, few households adhered to gender roles however clearly conceptualised they were. Finally, gardeners procured knowledge largely through family networks, and parents often established the basics during childhood. This led to a low level of change over time in gardening practice, although the actual spread of gardens throughout the area was of course considerable. They were almost impervious to the whims of gardening fashion. Chapter Eight has shown some important differences concerning these points.

Fendalton, like Riccarton, is not a homogeneous zone, and is made up of a number of different sizes of section and types of household. Indeed, state housing exists in the area. Nevertheless, there is a difference between 'inner' Fendalton – around Snowdon, Glandovey and Idris Roads – and 'outer Fendalton' – which must include 'Riccarter-cum-Fendalton', but also the Jeffreys Road area. In 'deep' Fendalton gardens might exceed an acre; other homes in the area were of the more standard quarter acre. The larger gardens combined a William Robinson wilderness with the curvilinear beds, borders and driveways found in the designs of John Claudius Loudon. They were both 'wild' and 'gardenesque'. Above all, the theme of informality and relaxation sets these gardens apart. They were places of play and leisure. The

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

smaller gardens were similar to those examined in Chapter Seven, although they were more likely to feature trees. There was a tendency to straight lines, and clearly marked out garden parts (in Rayna's case small hedges, requiring much labour to keep in order, segregated these parts). Tidiness was important, and front gardens were exposed to the street.

For both kinds of gardens, however, food provisioning was a major function, just as in Riccarton. Whether the work was done by paid gardeners or by householders, a large proportion of the food consumed was grown on site. Vegetable production from all of these gardens was massive. My interviewees attributed this, as in Riccarton, to the influence of the Depression. Apart from Pip Middleton, none saw World War Two as having any influence on vegetable production in home gardens. Alison Helm, who visited Britain in 1945, had been appalled at the destruction of front gardens in order to produce vast quantities of vegetables in London. When I asked if people in Christchurch grew vegetables for the war she responded emphatically, 'Oh, not for the war, here, no. We just did our own... [I]nvariably the man of the house had his veggie patch, and the thing to grow was your new potatoes for Christmas, your green peas for Christmas, and, you know, a few other veggies like that.'<sup>91</sup> While Lismore Lodge's vegetable garden was converted into rose beds after the war, other people were still establishing new ones. Vegetable gardens were important for most interviewees to 1954, although Gillian's father found other priorities, and Alison's husband's illness resulted in subdivision and the sale of their vegetable (and dahlia) garden. Ideas of fecundity and the need to draw food from the land informed all home gardens examined in this chapter, as was the case for Riccarton.

Of the vegetables produced, the most outstanding is asparagus. This is because almost everyone mentioned it, and in these cases, the asparagus bed was enormous (often the size of a standard room in a house). It was also labour intensive, requiring a lot of digging to get the bed established, and annual rituals of fertilisation. The widespread cultivation of this vegetable across the whole period revealed in these case studies demonstrates the economic dependence families had on their gardens. Asparagus is one of the only vegetables grown in the early part of spring and is therefore an essential component of subsistence gardening in a temperate climate. Asparagus, so labour intensive, demonstrates the point that even into the late 1940s and beyond, Christchurch home gardens retained an economic significance in complete variance with the situation portrayed by Hodgkinson for Adelaide and that given precedence in the various works of gardening literature that emphasised beautification as both an aim and a desire. Asparagus cultivation, or rather fertilisation, demonstrates a second

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<sup>91</sup> Alison Helm, interviewed 5 December 2005

point, about the acquisition and application of gardening knowledge. For those in the know, it often involved trips to the beach to collect seaweed, which implied seaside expeditions and leisure. The fact that such seaweed gathering for the asparagus bed was mentioned in the Fendalton study, but not in the Riccarton study suggests a spatial differentiation of gardening *savoir-faire*.

Overall, there was little in the Fendalton study to suggest that gardeners felt any great desire to emulate a pre-colonial environment, as had been hinted at for the gardens near Riccarton Bush. Nevertheless, natives such as cabbage trees were not uncommon along the many stream borders in the area, and smaller native plants could be found in shrub borders, in exactly the way described by Helen Leach. Willows could just as easily be found along streams, as in Rayna's garden, or even hydrangeas, as at Greystones. In the Peate garden, a pronounced Asian influence was expressed in the bamboos. Continental and English flora dominated many of the large gardens in the form of the great trees, such as the conifers and European beeches. Flora not indigenous to Europe but popularised in its gardens also featured, such as the weeping elms or magnolias, and of course the *Fontanesia chinensis* dominating the original homestead block of the young Fendall himself. In Fendalton, small gardens could get away with tree planting, in contrast to the homes south of Riccarton Road. As some of these trees became a hazard or were seen to be blocking sunlight they were sometimes removed, but large trees marked Fendalton out as a distinct area through to the end of the period of this study, and continue to do so today.

New technology was deployed in gardens to greater effect in the gardens of the wealthy, as might be expected. Compost as a technology followed the same trend outlined in Chapters Five and Seven. Alison's parents, who had lived in Merivale Lane during the 1930s, never had a compost heap, but relied on manure brought in from the country.<sup>92</sup> Pip's father always had a compost pile, but got 'scientific' with it only after the war. Certainly, by the late 1940s Albert Paynter kept properly made, neat compost heaps.<sup>93</sup> In the early 1950s Alison's husband was taught to make compost properly by Jack Humm. There was a deliberate attempt by these gardeners to implement practices as advised by experts. As well as new technological methods, gardeners implemented new pieces of equipment quickly. Helen's father had a state-of-the-art lawn mower, which he proudly used, as did Albert. Smaller motor mowers or sometimes push mowers were in all of the other gardens, and there is no hint of scything or makeshift equipment in lawn maintenance as there was in Riccarton. This, in fact,

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Warren Duncan, interviewed 19 December 2005

was one of the clearest markers of a male breadwinner's earning a competency. There was no need for making do in order to keep up appearances: things could be done 'properly'.

Doing things properly also meant by the right person and according to changing fashions. Chapter Seven noted that in Riccarton there was a strong sense of how gender should determine the division of household work, but that few if any households abided by this. The various descriptions and recollections presented in this chapter reiterate the particular roles of men and women, but suggest that such roles *were* adhered to, particularly in the largest gardens. As well as bottling fruit and harvesting for the kitchen, women, where they gardened, looked after flowers. In the three gardens where professional, expert gardeners were employed (the Peate, Paynter and Smellie Smith properties), preserving was the woman's main task and, in the case of the latter, setting fire to tall trees or instructing their removal. Pip's mother 'did the flower garden'. Alison did all the flower gardening at Stratford Street. Gillian's mother was the same. Albert's wife grew some plants for the house. Rayna's mother, however, was not supposed to interfere with the garden, which her father cared for almost entirely. Gillian's mother had an abiding love of trees, which she planted avidly.

Otherwise, men did most of the gardening work. The man of the house mowed the lawn in two of the largest gardens, those of Snowdon Road and Greystones, which seems truly to exemplify Belich's 'ritual harvest'.<sup>94</sup> These men also concerned themselves with hedge trimming. In the other gardens of this chapter, gardeners maintained lawns or else, at a certain age, the children did. Usually this was the eldest son. Men always tended the vegetable garden, and where this was impossible, as in the cases of Gillian and Alison, the vegetable garden was jettisoned. Sons, such as Pip or Dorothy's brother, helped with this work as well, particularly where digging was involved. Husbands and fathers might also grow flowers, such as Albert, Archibald Smellie Smith, or Rayna's father. The last of these was the only instance of a front garden exposed to the street being looked after by a man, and it is important to note that it was on the periphery of the area explored here. In these instances, women were confined to work inside the house. Whereas in Riccarton prescribed gendered gardening roles scarcely applied, they did matter in Fendalton.

Doing things 'properly' implied not only the correct tools, and the right people, but also paying attention to changing tastes. Fashion mattered in the Fendalton gardens examined here far more than in the Riccarton gardens, where the main objective had been to provide adequate food and to keep things looking tidy. Significant examples include the large conifers

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<sup>94</sup> Belich, *Paradise Reforged*, p.155

of the early gardens, the attempted rockeries of Wood Lane and Stratford Street, the fernery at Greystones, the herbaceous border and the enormous dahlia and rose beds that could also be found. The only dahlia bed noted in Chapter Eight virtually bordered Fendalton. Alison's attempts to remove the stonework and straight lines of the earlier Hamilton household (which were also to be found at her parent's home in Merivale Lane) and introduce more curvature demonstrate how form needed to be altered to suit the gradual modernisation of the New Zealand garden. The rapid replacement of the vegetable garden with a rose garden at Lismore Lodge speaks of the same process. Provisioning was always important, but these gardens also had the resources to alter form, to keep abreast of evolving theories of garden design. While none of those interviewed for this chapter mentioned any garden designer, the designs speak of a multitude of influences such as Robinson, Loudon and Jekyll.

Underlying this is a very different apparatus for accessing information about gardening to that of Riccarton. There, family networks were essential in gaining knowledge. In Fendalton gardens expert knowledge of the latest horticultural techniques was employed either in the form of specially trained staff, in membership of specialist societies, or publications such as the newspaper, *New Zealand Gardener* and gardening books.<sup>95</sup> The importance was always in keeping up to date. The fact that these gardeners were not solely reliant on information kept essentially within family networks means that they could be far less static. The ability and confidence to experiment with new ideas is an essential trait of Christchurch's superordinates, and their gardens reflect this.

Finally, then, it can be said after this discussion that the trope of 'beauty' did apply with peculiar appropriateness to Fendalton proper. But these gardens were also abundant. That Fendalton gardens have been seen primarily as gardens of beauty reminds the historian to note the difference between perceptions of the viewer and the viewed. These gardens were beautiful, but they were also bountiful, a point remarked on by all respondents.

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<sup>95</sup> Rayna showed me a number of gardening books used by both her father and her uncle, who gardened for the Helmores of Helmore's Lane

## 9

## The Hills

### Introduction

Chapter Four noted a pronounced interest by gardening organisations in rock gardens and, by extension, native plantings, in the home gardens of Christchurch's earliest hillside suburbs, Clifton and Cashmere. The Canterbury Horticultural Society promoted such gardens for the hills up to the mid 1930s; the Royal Forest and Bird Society promoted such gardens thereafter. Rockeries and native plants were described and celebrated across the city, but there was a clear preference shown in this literature for the gardens of the hills. The same chapter found the impetus for this came from a fear of environmental degradation. This had developed as a popular relationship with the Southern Alps emerged alongside transportation improvements. The trope of protection therefore influenced gardening choices where topography seemed most relevant. Chapter Four also suggested that these gardens promoted a kind of internationalism, and that the positioning of native plants spoke of a peculiarly 'antipodean' perspective. This chapter examines some of the gardens of Clifton and Cashmere and finds that gardeners there did indeed have an unexpectedly strong relationship with the mountains and that the idea of helping to protect the natural environment was an important motivation for them. Despite this, peculiar exotic plants preponderated. These gardens were entirely different from those on the flat, and of the four primary themes examined in this thesis, 'sustenance' figured most strongly.

### Clifton

Clifton Hill (Appendix 4.iv) is critically important in Christchurch garden history because, as Gordon Ogilvie noted, it was there that the first hill subdivision for strictly residential purposes was developed.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Samuel Hurst Seager developed this subdivision, known as the Spur, as a garden suburb (see Figure 47). Begun in 1902, it was the first of its kind in New Zealand.<sup>2</sup> The sales brochure when the Spur was auctioned in 1914 stated that '[t]he whole of the property was laid out as a garden... Each cottage has an uninterrupted view, is surrounded with well-grown trees, shrubs, flowers, and is reached by well-formed

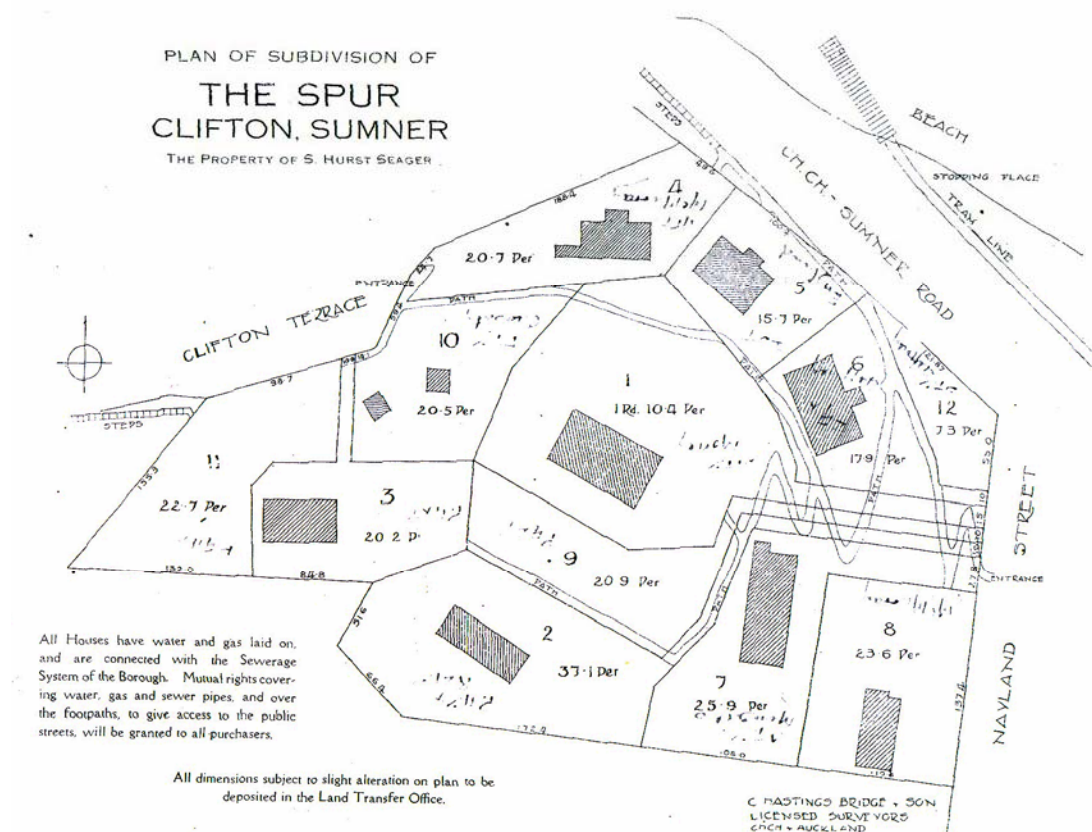
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<sup>1</sup> Gordon Ogilvie, *The Port Hills of Christchurch* (Wellington, 1978), p.40

<sup>2</sup> Ben Schrader, 'Garden Cities and Planning', *New Zealand Historic Places*, No.43, September 1993, p.32



asphalt paths.’<sup>3</sup> Despite its importance, Thelma Strongman did not mention Hurst Seager’s development, although she did note the special nature of the gardens here and in Cashmere. In particular, she highlighted their informality, and the prominence of rock gardens and alpiners.<sup>4</sup> In addition, ‘[t]ree ferns and the finest puriri in Canterbury grew in the Sumner-Clifton area.’ Cranleigh Barton’s garden featured acacias, cabbage trees, lacebarks and kowhai.<sup>5</sup>



**Figure 47: Plan of Subdivision of the Spur, Clifton, Sumner (1914)**  
Source: Sumner Museum

Most of the original Clifton estate was sold in 1903; amongst the eighteen purchasers were Hurst Seager, Joseph Kinsey, William Rollitt, James Crawford and Henry Meares.<sup>6</sup> Sarah Penney believed that the number of residences on Clifton Hill at the start of the 1920s was thirty-three.<sup>7</sup> During the 1920s the population of Clifton grew to about sixty.<sup>8</sup> Among them, noted Ogilvie, was the McCombs family, which ‘consolidated the Port Hills’ reputation for being – with James McCullough, John Barr, Tommy Taylor, Leonard Isitt and Harry Ell to

<sup>3</sup> Craddock, McCrostie Co, and Charles Clark, ‘The Spur: Sumner’ (Christchurch, 1914), p.4, Sumner Museum

<sup>4</sup> Thelma Strongman, *The Gardens of Canterbury* (Wellington, 1984), p.178

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.179

<sup>6</sup> Ogilvie, p.43

<sup>7</sup> Sarah Penney, *The Estuary of Christchurch* (Christchurch, 1982), p.81

<sup>8</sup> Ogilvie, p.47

assist – the hotbed of radical and Labour politics in the Canterbury region.’<sup>9</sup> Indeed, Melanie Nolan recorded that the McCullough family attempted to start a ‘co-operative experiment’ there with other socialists.<sup>10</sup> The very existence of a garden suburb on the hill, coming out of the reformist Garden City movement as discussed in Chapter Three is an early example of this.



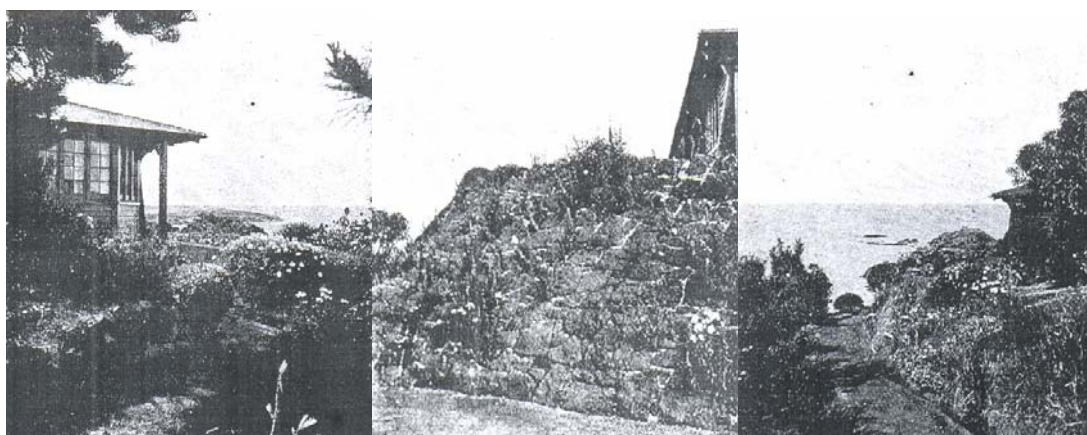
**Figure 48: One of the Spur houses, probably No.8.  
Photographer: Steffano Webb  
Source: Ref. G- 4077-1/1  
Alexander Turnbull Library**

Hurst Seager began his Spur subdivision with a house in the centre of the area, in which he lived. By 1914 the garden at this property – number 1 – was well established, as shown in the sales brochure. Three perspectives, seen in Figure 49, show a cottage garden with red rock walls, shell paths and flowering shrubs that appear to be daisies. From a feature rock wall numerous plants cascade, in the way described by Alison Helm in Chapter Eight. This property was one rood 10.4 perches. Other gardens of the Spur shown are similar, but number 4 was particularly noteworthy. It was described as the most sheltered property, with ‘a well protected valley garden of rich soil.’ The tenant, who had lived there for six years, was ‘an enthusiastic gardener, and has made his garden one of the beauty spots of the Spur’.<sup>11</sup> From the image provided it appears that this garden was far denser than other gardens of the subdivision, packed with tall shrubs and flowering plants through which a path led to the house.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.. Ogilvie has almost certainly mistaken James McCullough for Jack McCullough, as did, according to Melanie Nolan, Barry Gustafson. Melanie Nolan, *Kin: A Collective Biography of a New Zealand Working-Class Family* (Christchurch, 2005), p.112. She also notes that Jack McCullough employed his brother James to paint his ‘whare at Sumner’, Nolan, *Kin*, p.128. In her earlier work on Jack McCullough Nolan mentions his purchase of land on Clifton from Tommy Taylor. Melanie Nolan, ‘Family and Culture: Jack and Maggie McCullough and the Christchurch Skilled Working Class, 1880s-1920s’, in John Martin and Kerry Taylor (eds), *Culture and the Labour Movement* (Palmerston North, 1991), p.168. On McCombs’s radicalism, see also Libby Plumridge, ‘The Necessary but not Sufficient Condition: Christchurch Labour and Working-Class Culture’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, Vol. 19, No.2, 1985, p.141

<sup>10</sup> Nolan, ‘Family and Culture’, p.168

<sup>11</sup> Craddock, *et. al.*, p.11



**Figure 49: Views of 1 the Spur from 1914 sales brochure**  
**Source: Sumner Museum**

Most of the properties were between fifteen and twenty-five perches. Number 2 was 37.1 perches. Number 1 was the largest. Above it sat Lot 9, a section of 20.9 perches. The buyer of number 1 had first right of purchase, so that the garden could be extended considerably. Already it was 'planted with native trees'.<sup>12</sup> Native plants therefore, from the photographs and this solitary reference, preponderated here, unsurprising given Hurst Seager's interest in natives.<sup>13</sup>



**Figure 50: 2 the Spur, 1914 (included in sales brochure). Photographer: Steffano Webb.**  
**Source: Ref. G- 4018-1/1, Alexander Turnbull Library**

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p.14

<sup>13</sup> John Cookson, 'Pilgrims' Progress – Image, Identity and Myth in Christchurch', in John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall, *Southern Capital: Towards a City Biography* (Christchurch, 2000), p.30

Lot 9 did not get incorporated into Cottage 1's garden. Instead, what became number 9 the Spur was home to the daughters of William 'Cabbage' Wilson,<sup>14</sup> whose own gardening prowess had transformed the Maori site Otautahi into the birthplace of the Garden City, as described in Chapter Two. Of the two – Ethel and Lillian – it was the former who maintained the garden, 'which was outstanding for its roses even in those days of beautiful Clifton Hill gardens.'<sup>15</sup> Their rose garden was still in existence in 1978, when Fern Every and her husband bought the property.

At that time, Fern, raised in Ohio and the mountains to the west of Beijing (her parents were missionaries), had lived on Clifton for forty years, since 1938. Her first home was at 25 Clifton Terrace, not part of the original subdivision. The garden there was small and the section steep, 'no place for vegetables there', but lovely. Succulents were prominent, and there were a few natives. She did very little gardening there; the property seemed to look after itself. Adjoining the property, in the valley, Fern remembers punga and other native trees including a kowhai, as well as Australian eucalypts. Native birds frequented the area.

Fern's case is useful in helping understand the power childhood can exert on adult gardening efforts, because in approximately 1949 her mother sent a packet of sweet corn seed from Southern California, where she had retired, and Fern's day-to-day life altered markedly thereafter. Although she believes sweet corn was impossible to get in New Zealand in 1950, in fact, as seen in Chapter Eight some people did grow it in Christchurch much earlier. It was obviously scarce still. For Fern it was a staple childhood crop and if not speaking explicitly about transplanting a piece of the Midwest, growing sweet corn was certainly transplanting a piece of her Midwestern childhood. Indeed, her mother had grown sweet corn in Ohio since *she* was a child. She also grew the crop in China: 'I had to water my mother's corn sometimes in China where she'd planted a few rows... I knew how to test it when it was right to eat. Stick your thumb in there and if it is juicy it's right.' There was a sudden impulse to grow this rare food, but no immediate land on which to do this. A satellite garden was therefore established on a spare acre on Panorama Road, part of the Mountfort market garden. 'So I planted my corn!' The experience was so profound that, the following year, she purchased the plot. This time she planted more corn, as well as about twenty tomatoes and strawberries. The strawberries proved especially important, because they were so successful. Market gardeners on the hill sought her advice on this particular crop. Subsequently she also grew potatoes, cabbages, silver beet, lettuces, carrots, pumpkins and other vegetables. She also grew sunflowers:

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<sup>14</sup> Fern Every, interviewed 16 July 2005

<sup>15</sup> Penney, *The Estuary*, p.82

I planted sunflowers. Great big ones all round my corn patch and they were lovely, so we had sunflowers. And of course, they didn't know anything about eating sunflower seeds then, but I knew about it because of having them in China, so I used to save a lot of sunflower seeds. And pumpkin seeds, I used to save those too because they eat those... in China.<sup>16</sup>

Fern had been exposed to hillside food production early on, particularly the terraced millet gardens. But her own gardening efforts on Clifton drew not only from her observation of Chinese peasant production, but also on her mother's garden there and her own small garden:

[My mother's] parents had a farm in Ohio, and she had a lovely garden there, and she always missed her garden. She had a couple of rows of corn in China, and a few flowers and things, and she used to have to get a water boy, we had our own water boy, you see, to do all this watering... So there was a little land just near the well... I wanted to have a garden, so she said 'well, you can have that bit there. What would you want to plant?' And I said 'Sunflowers!' So I planted sunflowers, and that was my garden.<sup>17</sup>

This amalgam of memories became manifest on the hill.

Apart from some childhood observations about horticultural practice, however, most of Fern's actual gardening knowledge came from neighbours and acquaintances. The tram into town – where conversation with such people was almost a given – was an important site for passing on gardening tips:

I rode on the tram in those days. I asked the ladies – people – about gardening. I think I had some tomato plants I had bought that I was going to plant... I didn't know anything about gardening. I learned it all... on the bus [tram].<sup>18</sup>

Neighbours helped as well:

Chris McCombs, who was Chris Tulloch, before she was married, it was her father who taught me how to plant silver beet, and Mr [...] who lived up there... I think they had a flower market, too, and [he] taught me how to plant carrots, how to thin them out so you didn't have too many in a row afterwards. Things like that.<sup>19</sup>

Knowledge could also be garnered from public talks, and here, once again, the Canterbury Horticultural Society was particularly useful.

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<sup>16</sup> Fern Every, interviewed 16 July 2005

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

I remember that actually not long after we lived there... Jack Humm... gave a lecture down here in the Town Hall... and he talked about the plants suitable to grow up on Clifton and Sumner, and that's how I happen to remember his name, because he said that crab apple that is named after him does well in this area.<sup>20</sup>

The Sumner and Redcliffs Beautifying Association probably hosted this talk, but the prominence of Horticultural Society experts is important. As noted in Chapter Three, Jack Humm was a judge of the Sumner and Redcliffs home garden competitions. Community networks supported gardening experimentation in the area.

As had the original sales information for the Spur subdivision, Fern remarked on the good soil. In places it could be somewhat rocky, but the north west winds blew particles over the Plains which became trapped as loess deposits between exposed igneous protrusions. Strawberries did well in these places between rocks from a combination of fertile loess, warmth radiating off the rock and of course elevation above the frost line. However, improving soil fertility at Panorama Road did occupy Fern and her husband's time. They brought horse manure from the horse paddock next door. Seaweed was gathered in large rubbish bags from the beach and used for potatoes:

[T]here was a ditch in between [the hilled potatoes]. I filled all this full of seaweed, so that when I dug the potatoes, of course I threw the soil over onto the seaweed, so that was very good soil. I did that year after year, when I had my potatoes.<sup>21</sup>

Fern did not mention composting at all, but building soil was considered important.

Vegetables were always brought to the home. During the 1940s, and the war, they were delivered up the hill from the Chinese vegetable shop in the village. The decline in Chinese market-garden production during the war cited by the City Council's Vegetable Committee (see Chapter Five) did not affect the situation in Sumner. Fern never heard anything about the Civic Vegetable Campaign, and believed that her neighbours did not grow vegetables during the war either, due to the steepness of their sections. Afterwards, Fern brought vegetables down the hill from her plot on Panorama Road everyday. Although the point should not be pressed too far, this situation was reminiscent of her life as the daughter of missionaries in China. Certainly, the Chinese experience greatly influenced her desire to live on the hill with a view of the mountains.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. Fern also grew asparagus, but not until the mid 1960s.



The mountains remained an important influence, as a piece of Fern's felt-work, showing the Southern Alps and *Ranunculus* attests. Since the 1940s she had been a member of the Forest and Bird Society, and attended the field trips. 'I loved that... Each trip we'd go on they'd have people to tell us about the flowers, native trees, and sometimes a geologist would come along and tell us about the rocks and the soil.' Yet while Fern had a particular passion for native flora, she did not plant any in her gardens. Partly this was because the garden at 25 Clifton Terrace was already planted, was a small and difficult section, and the gully next door was established in natives. Partly it was because her attention turned to vegetable growing. Despite her interest, the idea of 'protection' did not govern her gardening actions; 'sustenance', however, did.

This was directly true for the Englands, who lived on Kinsey Terrace from 1928 until the property was bought by the Guys during World War Two.<sup>22</sup> Kinsey Terrace was developed out of the Kinsey estate, Kinsey's house having been designed and built by Hurst Seager in 1904, the year of the subdivision (Figure 51).<sup>23</sup> The Englands' garden had been developed in the 1920s 'by a florist in Christchurch – Shillito's – they provided the basis of many of the seeds and plants that were already growing when we went there, so we weren't starting off from a raw paddock...' The variety of plants grown, mostly economic crops, is surprising.

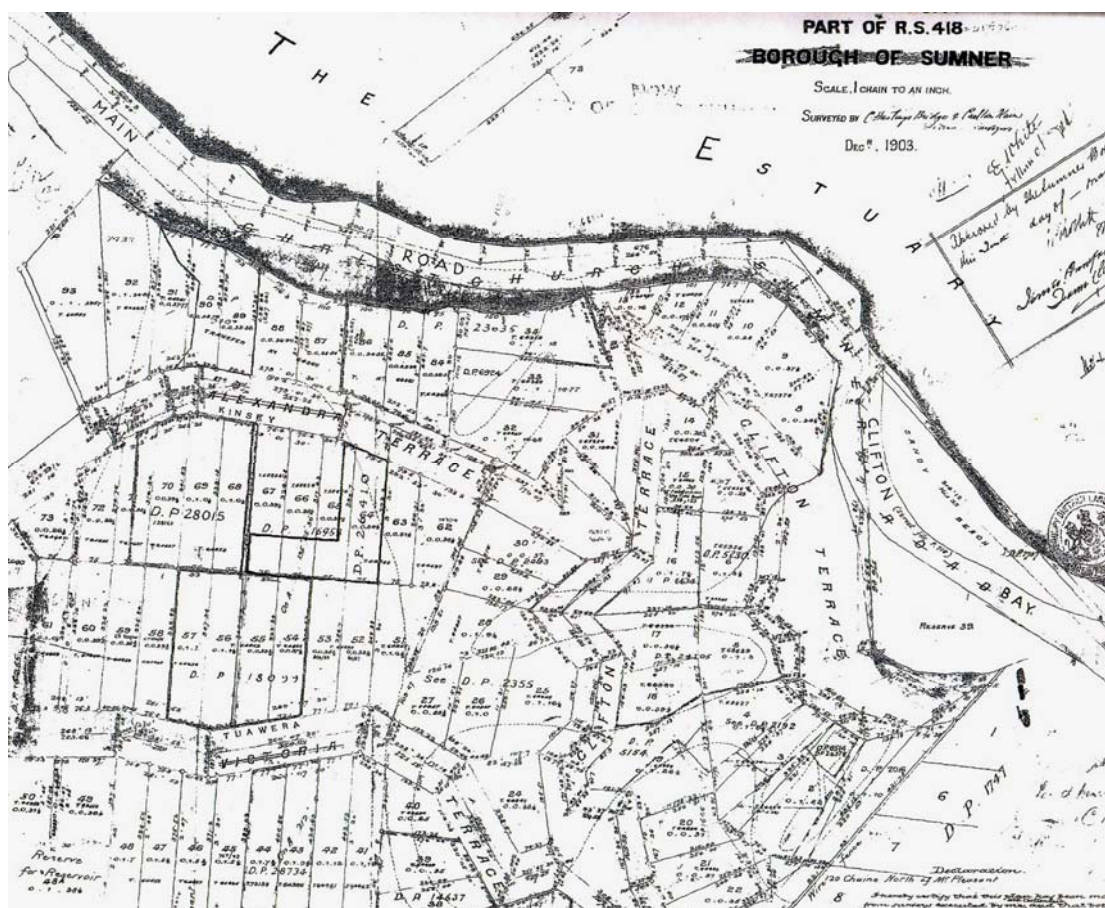
[W]e were able to grow a lot of plants and trees that normally wouldn't be grown in Christchurch. We grew things like tree tomato or tamarillos, fig trees, tobacco plants, hazelnuts, almonds, walnuts, many fruit trees, plums, many varieties, cherry trees, peaches... citrus, blackberries, gooseberries, some blue berries. And in the flower growing area we had, most of the small hedges around the place were made of daisy hedges that were cut back in the summer and flowered in the winter. The budleas and the echiums from the Kinsey place, cactuses, many small flowering plants. Because this was a pretty difficult period of one's – the economic time of New Zealand – we relied on not really trying to have an ornamental property, but an economic property that would provide some help towards the income. So we used the flower growing from the period of about June, late May June right through to August, picking daisies. They'd be picked in the weekend, Saturday/Sunday, taken to market on the first tram on Monday morning, and if you were quick about it you could catch the same tram back to Redcliffs without being late for school... On the vegetable side, we grew just about everything that was needed to supply the house with, potatoes, beans, peas, tomatoes, parsnips, carrots, green vegetables. We had an asparagus bed...<sup>24</sup>

Tobacco plants were grown as well, and the preparation of the leaves was a complicated process. Other gardens in the area also grew tobacco.

<sup>22</sup> Hugh England, interviewed 9 February 2006

<sup>23</sup> Although Ogilvie also says Kinsey entertained Captain Scott there in 1901. Ogilvie, p.43; DP 1980, Subdivision of RS 418, 1904, *LINZ*

<sup>24</sup> Hugh England, interviewed 9 February 2006



**Figure 51: DP 1980, 1904 Subdivision of Clifton Hill, including Kinsey Terrace**  
**Source: LINZ**

The garden was not wholly used for self-provisioning, however:

[I]n the rock faces coming down from nearest the road entrance we had a small pond that had been created in the rock which was about six or seven metres square... and this had water lilies in it and frogs and things of that sort... It was fed by water coming down from natural channels further up the hill. And in the summer time it was kept full by using tap water... It had a little bridge that went across the top of pond, so you could stand on the bridge and look into the pond... so really it became a bit of a feature just inside the front entrance.<sup>25</sup>

Despite this, Hugh was emphatic that the pond 'was the only part of the property that... they devoted to anything that you could say was of an ornamental nature.' Most of the flowers grown on site were for sale.

Just below the pond area was a large area of arum lilies, which just seemed to self-perpetuate without any work... and they just grew thicker and thicker... We also had a small glasshouse where we used to do some of the early seed growing and

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.



propagation. And behind that was a fernery, where we used to supply the ferns to the florists.<sup>26</sup>

As well as describing the main functions of the garden, Hugh also described its layout in detail. ‘The lower third had a row of pine trees growing down on the property below, which were really a protection against the nor’west. The nor’west wind was... pretty vicious over there, so any sort of a wind break was needed otherwise you’d have everything blown out of the bloody place.’ Also in the lower third were the fruit trees. In the middle section were the vegetable gardens. The asparagus bed was about five metres, with at least three rows in it, and was well fertilised with sea weed.

In the top was the things like the echiums, the cactuses, a lot of the small plants like boronias, those sort of flowering plants... Any of the hedges down the side, where you could make a hedge of daisies, was almost flower growing as well, because during the winter that was always a mass of daisies flowering there.<sup>27</sup>

The steepness of the property was one defining characteristic. For this reason it ‘was terraced right from top to bottom, creating many small flat areas... running along the contour of the section, stepping down in the Chinese style of narrow plots of land that you could grow things on.’ Harold Stemmer, a resident of Clifton and son of Kinsey’s gardener Robert Stemmer,<sup>28</sup> built the rock walls. These were mostly completed when the Englands moved in, in 1928. The rocks all came from the property, and Hugh conjectured that it had been mostly blasted out of the area that later became the lily pond. Environmental conditions therefore lent themselves to features such as rock walls and ponds.

In this garden, the whole family helped out as needed, and nobody had particular areas of interest or particular jobs to perform. ‘People just got detailed to doing things that needed to be done. There was no such thing as your job, or an area to look after. People just generally looked after the whole area...’ It was work, and not pleasure. ‘In some ways it became like a job. When you do things for necessity it hasn’t the same enjoyment when you’re creating what you like rather than what someone else needs.’ The garden was a garden of sustenance.

It also contained many decorative plants peculiar to this part of Christchurch. As mentioned, Hugh believed many of these had blown into their garden from the Kinsey estate. In terms of understanding the particularities of Clifton gardens, this is a major point. It directly relates to the internationalism noted in Chapter Four.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ogilvie, p.45

Kinsey was a shipping agent in Christchurch and he appeared to have access to a lot of exotic plants that weren't normally available in New Zealand. And some of the plants that still exist around the area, would have emanated from his property, and have grown from there right round into McCormacks Bay. The blue echium... his property had many of those, many large succulent, cactus plants... large ones... round about one or two metres square. They were dotted over the whole section and amongst the lawn areas...

[H]e seemed to have overseas access to a lot of those things, particularly South African plants, that were brought to his place and we were able to get from time to time some of the cuttings.<sup>29</sup>

Not least of Kinsey's many international contacts was Arthur Hill, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. The two corresponded frequently and with fondness after Hill's stay on Clifton in 1928.<sup>30</sup> Kinsey's garden featured large cacti of unspecified genus, echiums (Pride of Madeira) and succulents. Of the latter, those of the *Carpobrotus* genus seem to have been most common. Commonly called 'ice plant' (not to be confused with Livingstone daisies, also called ice plant), it is not clear whether *Carpobrotus edulis*<sup>31</sup> (ice plant) or *Carpobrotus acinaciformis*<sup>32</sup> (pig face) is specifically referred to, although possibly both featured. Both originated in South Africa. His garden paths, incidentally, were lined with kenite lava rocks from Mount Erebus which, as Vicky Heward has noted, came back as ballast on the *Terra Nova* after Captain Scott's unhappy expedition to the South Pole.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Hugh England, interviewed 9 February 2006

<sup>30</sup> Occasionally this might specifically relate to Leonard Cockayne, for example Arthur Hill to Joseph Kinsey, 4 February 1928, Kinsey, Sir Joseph James Papers, 1869-1935, Reel 2, *CM*

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.nps.gov/goga/parklabs/library/plantguide/red-pink/iceplant.htm>. Accessed 11 March 2006

<sup>32</sup> [www.science.uniserve.edu.ac/school/curric/stage4\\_5/native\\_plants/gallery/pigface/](http://www.science.uniserve.edu.ac/school/curric/stage4_5/native_plants/gallery/pigface/). Accessed 11 March 2006

<sup>33</sup> Vicky Heward, 'Te Hau o Te Atua', in *Christchurch Heritage Houses* (Christchurch, 2004)



**Figure 52: Joseph J. Kinsey's Cactus Garden, 14 Kinsey Terrace, Clifton Hill, c.1900**  
**Source: J J Kinsey Photograph, Ref. 1940.193.85, CM**

Not only did the Englands receive plants from Kinsey, intentionally or otherwise, they also received gardening information in the form of literature. Other sources of information were gardening magazines and Yates guides. Despite a similarity of plant materials, however, and cross-overs with gardening information, the England garden was obviously nothing like Kinsey's. Theirs was a garden for sustenance: It 'was all a matter of getting an income to look after what was a pretty tough economic period in the country.'<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Hugh England, interviewed 9 February 2006



**Figure 53: Joseph J. Kinsey's Garden, 14 Kinsey Terrace, Clifton Hill, c1900**  
**Source: J J Kinsey Photograph, Ref. 1951.35.186, CM**

Kathleen Guy, who was a child when her parents bought the Englands' home in 1945, has lived there ever since.<sup>35</sup> A complete description of it is therefore available from the end of the 1920s through to the end of the period under review. Its form changed considerably under the Guys, and its meaning altered in turn. Sustenance continued to play an important part, but so, equally, did protection. According to Kathleen, the garden was well laid out though somewhat overgrown. She remembered the vegetables being at the bottom of the section, which conflicts with Hugh's account. However, the rest seems accurate. Fruit trees were established, for example plums, cooking apples, pears and quinces. Most of the fruit trees were down by the vegetables, although there were a few by the house. Very sweet grapes grew as well.<sup>36</sup> When the property was first subdivided, macrocarpa hedges had been planted down each side, and pine trees along the bottom as Hugh said, thus providing for shelter and fuel. Kathleen therefore recollects the basis of an attractive garden, both abundant and beautiful, but it seems safe, given Hugh's account, to assume that many of these features predated the Englands, and had been modified to provide sustenance during a difficult economic period.

The Guys wrought considerable change. Kathleen's father, George, continued to establish fruit trees, often those known to him in the North Island, which could do well on Clifton, such

<sup>35</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 2 September 2005

<sup>36</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 21 November 2005

as loquats, feijoas<sup>37</sup> and guavas. He also planted more vines – kiwifruit, banana passionfruit and additional grapes.<sup>38</sup> The vegetable garden retained its importance. George grew carrots, peas, beans, cabbages, a lot of spinach, ordinary potatoes and pumpkins. He would:

get up early in the morning and he would do at least an hour's work in the garden and he would come up and have a shower and go to work. And when he came home he put on gardening clothes and he'd go down the garden again for at least another hour, and it kept him alive I think, because it gave him time to get distressed and be a part of something different.<sup>39</sup>

He 'got solace from it'. Embedded in this is the idea of gardening as a form of sustenance, not just physical but psychological.

The same was true for Kathleen's mother, who focussed her attention on shrubs and flowers. There was a large rose bed up by the house, and '[w]e planted daisies and we had rows of anemones, and Christmas lilies.' She also grew flowers in the vegetable garden; in fact these were grown for market, which eventually paid for Kathleen's skiing lessons.<sup>40</sup> In this is an important continuity with the garden's previous economic uses. Over all the garden was 'actually quite beautiful'.<sup>41</sup> One of the key components of a beautiful garden on the flat was missing, however: the lawn, 'and my parents made a definite commitment to that.' This garden, like those around it, did not conform to the English Garden City type in their beauty:

I think that the people who came out here were a bit mad anyway. Because it was an awful long way from the centre of the city. And I don't know that those English garden types worked very well here.<sup>42</sup>

Distance from the centre meant room for experimentation, even if the basic layout of the garden – fruit and vegetables at the back, flowers and shrubs at the front – did essentially conform.

Very little else about their gardening resembled a type found in the city. Like Fern, the mountains were always a basic point of reference for both Kathleen and her parents. 'My parents were very interested in the mountains. They were passionate.'<sup>43</sup> Indeed, Kathleen's

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<sup>37</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 2 September 2005

<sup>38</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 21 November 2005

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Kathleen eventually represented New Zealand at the Commonwealth Games. Penney, *The Estuary*, p.84

<sup>41</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 21 November 2005

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 2 September 2005

mother was ‘a dedicated skier and climber.’<sup>44</sup> Unlike Fern, the love of the mountains directly influenced their gardening choices, and the establishment of a native bush pocket:

They [my parents] met each other at Mount Cook. My mother was passionate about the bush. Absolutely passionate. I can remember going with her to the West Coast when I was nine, and we went on a walking trip... from Murchison to Greymouth, and we would walk past certain areas and my mother would burst into tears because the forest was gone, that she had seen before I was born. And my father was passionate about birds. He was an ornithologist, as a hobby, and so a lot of the trees were planted here to feed the birds. And so we for example have a lot of tuis and bellbirds that live here... This is a gully, it’s a natural place where bush would have been, and it’s self watering because it is a gully, and so it is a good place for a bush...<sup>45</sup>

A passion for recreating native bush and providing habitat for native birds, seen to be severely threatened ‘in nature’, was a major factor in the remaking of this hillside garden. The ‘protection’ trope examined in Chapter Five predominated here after 1945. This did not mean a strict adherence to South Island plants, or even to New Zealand natives:

George used to get a lot of his stuff from catalogues, and because he was an Auckland, we got some North Island plants here. But we planted the eucalypts, a) because they’re faster growing, and b) they provide the nectar, the food for those birds, because the podocarps were still very small...<sup>46</sup>

Ensuring the birds had food was the first priority, while the bush was re-establishing underneath.

As well as the desire to help protect the environment, Kathleen described a very strong sense of sustenance as well, in which making this particular kind of garden helped establish a particular kind of relationship with nature:

[W]e were brought up with mountains, and I like the fact that it makes us feel small. You realise our real place on this planet, when you’re in the mountains, which I don’t think you do if you have a house of the sort I was talking about, where everything is yours, and created and neat and tidy, and a plant is supposed to fill into that neat space and be exactly the right shape, and they can be discarded like last year’s car, and another one put in. And they are just sort of a continuation of the lounge out into the garden. And I guess it feels very safe, and you’re in control in that. Whereas this place tells you... like the mountains do, that we are very transitory, that we’re just one of the things that live here, and that other things go on beyond.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 21 November 2005

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 2 September 2005

We loved the view because of the view of the mountains, and the sea... It frames it completely. It's sheltered, it's alive... It keeps you in tune with the fact that we are part of the planet, and that we're not that important. Because the trees that are grown here are trees that were growing in New Zealand before any humans came here...<sup>48</sup>

The fact that such a garden could lead to a new sense of self, and especially that making it was seen as working within a scheme that transcended the civic beautification agenda makes it appropriate to think about it in terms of protection and sustenance.<sup>49</sup>

Building soil fertility on the site was important. Albert Howard style compost was not prepared on site until the 1970s, however. Until then, organic waste was rotted in heaps throughout the garden. Food scraps, however, were processed through the chicken coop, which was down by the vegetable garden, and routinely dug into the soil. Like Fern, they brought seaweed up from the beach – the Guys brought sand as well – which helped produce an excellent tilth in the vegetable plot. They also utilised wood ash from carefully prepared bonfires. Soil improvements therefore followed the pattern of the 1920s and 1930s, and did not adhere to new developments.

Like Fern, Kathleen highlighted the importance of community in passing on gardening knowledge:

when my parents first arrived there were some older women in the area who had lived here... I think they were... First World War widows, but there were several women who owned properties here, and they introduced themselves and said to my parents if there were any plants that you want, just feel free to get a cutting. So a lot of the plants that we got here were on the advice of people who had lived here a very long time, and my father, both my parents, I think, saw this as the right way to do things, because you asked the locals.<sup>50</sup>

In a similar way gardening work could also involve the community. This was particularly the case with the topping of tall trees, in which all the men in the area would bring their own equipment, do the work together, and divide the wood amongst themselves. '[T]hat communal thing was lovely.'<sup>51</sup>

Kathleen's recollections of other gardens in the area suggest certain commonalities. A degree of self-sufficiency was common, as were native plants: 'I think they were less prone to the native being the enemy than in the centre of town...' The defining plant species in Clifton

<sup>48</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 21 November 2005

<sup>49</sup> It is no surprise, then, that Kathleen eventually married a German organic farmer who maximised compost production on the Clifton property. Kathleen Guy, interviewed 2 September 2005

<sup>50</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 21 November 2005

<sup>51</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 2 September 2005

gardens, however, were certain exotics, particularly Pride of Madeira (echiums) and various succulents. For Kathleen, these plants played a special social role, because, she said, women had brought them to Clifton. 'A lot of the plants that do very well on Clifton are the ones that were picked up by the women on the... sailing ships coming out to New Zealand, and they would stop at a port and get some of the plants... There's a lot of things off the Spanish Coast here that do very well...'<sup>52</sup> Thus, for Kathleen women had not only brought the defining plants to Clifton, but continued to hold the significant horticultural knowledge of the area. Clearly, this version conflicts with Hugh's, where Kinsey was responsible for these plant introductions, although it is not impossible to reconcile the accounts. Either way, these plants acted as markers of the exotic.

Robert McClurg, his daughter Martha and her husband Len Bassett, along with her daughter by her first marriage, moved into three quarters of an acre at number 40 Kinsey Terrace in 1939, and lived there until 1947.<sup>53</sup> The property was the last on Mulgan's Track, and the first on Kinsey Terrace. Prior to their arrival, the Wainwrights had already established fruit trees: plums, apricots, nectarines, cherry plums, green gages and almond trees. The Bassett family produced a remarkable garden strangely typical of this particular street. Like Kinsey, Robert had a particular love of cacti. He collected them from all parts of the world, often given them by his many acquaintances. One of these was John Taylor, later foreman of the Botanic Gardens and president of the Horticultural Society; Robert apparently 'started him off'. The cacti, according to Robert's granddaughter Joan Lamby, numbered in the thousands. '[T]here really were thousands of them. Every little wee pocket of soil had a plant in it.' He knew all their names. The rest of the family, however, were indifferent to them.

Apart from the cacti and the fruit trees, which were dotted about the property, the garden also contained a lot of flowers, which were Joan's mother's special interest. Both she and Robert grew flowers for the market: 'Anemones, ranunculus, nerines and so on.' She also grew gladioli and spring bulbs. Vegetables were not grown due to difficulties with irrigation and especially the very steep incline of the section. Describing the garden as a walk up the path from the road, Joan recalled:

there seemed to be flowers all along the border there, and then there were steps up to the house and there was a big plum tree on the right hand side, and there was the most beautiful red rose... On the left hand side going up these steps, just before you got to the top, there was a fish pond, and beside it was this huge cacti, a prickly pear, it was a dangerous thing, it had to be cut back. It wasn't cut out, it was cut back... It had

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<sup>52</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 21 November 2005

<sup>53</sup> Joan Lamby, interviewed 15 February 2006



like fur on it, but they were actually prickles, and they got into you, and they were a terrible thing...<sup>54</sup>

As with the Englands, the fish pond had water lilies growing in it. Similarly, the property was terraced using rocks found on the property, although much of this work had still not been completed in 1939. There were five large terraces ‘as you came in the gate, and then on the other side there’d be probably ten right up to the top. A lot.’ Despite this, Joan ‘hated’ the garden, which in no way measured up to the garden in the Chathams from where her family had come.

Prue Lovell-Smith also came to Christchurch from the Chathams, arriving in 1936 and settling in Kinsey Terrace in 1953.<sup>55</sup> Joan’s step-father was Prue’s uncle, her mother’s brother. To complicate matters, Len and Martha were cousins, and Robert McClurg (Uncle Bob) was Prue’s grandmother’s brother (her great uncle). Prue, who lived on Cashmere until 1947, often visited the Bassett home on Clifton. She remembers it as a rocky garden. The prickly pear was an enduring memory. Prue’s garden had been a flower garden for the market, and hidden under over-grown grass were much older features:

[U]p the back of the section there were raised beds with rocky borders, and he [the previous owner] apparently grew flowers in those, and the remnants of freesias and things like that in the garden, when we cut down the grass. And all down the side of the section here was sloping, full of daisy bushes... There were macrocarpa hedges all around when we came here too, round the four sides... And down the east side of the section there was lots of succulents and I think in some ways it was the typical Sumner garden, pelargoniums and geraniums and succulents. [I]t was a grass paddock when we got here, out the back. But it didn’t take long to get it into shape. And there was a fernery too, behind one of the macrocarpa hedges. A big fernery. [W]hen we came here there was [also] a plum tree... and a couple of citrus trees...Grapefruit...<sup>56</sup>

There were also the remnants of a rock garden, which Prue had removed with a bulldozer. They were impractical in terms of weed maintenance, and she never thought of using sprays. The house, according to Prue, had been Kinsey’s gardener’s home. It had been typical, therefore, for the area, with rock edges, and rock gardens, macrocarpa hedges and fruit trees. The large fernery was an oddity, but very fashionable for the period it had been established. Possibly it was part of the market gardening operation, as it was for the Englands.

Changes were soon wrought.

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Prue Lovell-Smith, interviewed 25 January 2006

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

[W]e didn't really need all these daisy bushes to start with. We had children... And up the bank... we had quite big lawns up the back, too... Except for the veggie garden, right up the top, and the hen house...<sup>57</sup>

The vegetable garden contained 'curly kale, we always had that, and silver beet and cabbages. Potatoes. Beans, peas.' They also had a passionfruit vine; like the tamarillos in the England garden and the citrus elsewhere, these could only be grown with ease on the hill. The vegetables (and lawns) were a possibility because at this end of Kinsey Terrace the properties tended to contain larger areas of flat land.

However, Prue had built up a large area in front of the house using garden waste. In addition, Prue believed that the soil was 'pretty good'. 'I don't think we ever put anything on it when we grew veggies. The only thing would be fowl manure, I think. But I don't think we went much for composting in those days...' She did have 'my dumps. I suppose they're big compost heaps. And gradually they rot down. All the bank all around the house has been built up like that.' As in Kathleen's garden, green waste was simply piled in the garden and used as needed. Albert Howard compost was not employed at all.

Prue remembered that her neighbour next door, Mr. Major, had an immaculate garden, 'not a weed to be seen. It just wasn't us.' Strikingly, he had two glasshouses full of cacti, including one restricted specimen, which 'was inspected every year to make sure it had the same number of buds on it, or, if one had dropped off, where was it?' Furthermore, 'the whole back garden was just full of cactus... He had shelves everywhere, and paths and shelves, and tins and every kind of container, old pots, household dishes full of cactus...' His cactus garden had been established before the Lovell-Smiths moved in.

This obsession with cacti, mirrored in the Kinsey and Bassett gardens, but not in any other gardens discussed in this thesis, lends particular weight to the idea that ecology affected fashions. The Lovell-Smith garden also 'had big cactus plants down the front when we came here. There were steps down... But I cut it out because I thought it was dangerous for the children.' As will be seen, Prue's mother had a particular love of cacti, which she had developed in the Chathams, and Robert grew cacti there as well. Yet this is not just a transfer of styles from home to Clifton; Kinsey also grew cacti in his garden. Native plants did not stand out. Mr Major grew a pohutukawa and kowhais, but his tamarisk in the front garden was an equally important feature. Unusual plants, and the ability to grow species from all over the world, were a feature of these gardens. In this sense, they did reflect the gardening

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

literature of the Canterbury Horticultural Society, but the emphasis on cacti rather than natives seems strangely out of step.

Rona Brunt moved into 33 Kinsey Terrace the year after Prue, in 1954.<sup>58</sup> The section then was a steep and rocky paddock. They developed the whole garden into a rock garden, building up some rock walls, and leaving other rocks where they were and working around them. They also planted some fruit trees, apple, plum and Blackboy peach. In the front of the house a lawn was established, but eventually done away with. Rona's approach to gardening was 'fiddling'. The garden itself was '[v]ery wild'. She said it was 'not structured, or, like you might have a garden on the flat that's all nice flowers and laid out properly, but ours, you just do it when you find you have a bit of soil and you have a plant, and I'll just put it in.'<sup>59</sup> For Rona, the environment lent itself to a wild kind of garden, and she was adamant that had her garden been on the flat it would have had a lawn with flowers at the front, and vegetables at the back. This begs the question, of course, why she and her husband moved to Clifton. The answer was simple: the 'fresh air, and the view, and the birds... and just everything about it. I love... looking out to the sea. The mountains, the snow on them on a nice day. We're very fortunate, very privileged to live here.'

She particularly liked looking at cabbage trees, though not because they were natives. 'They always look nice, I don't know. They just give it a real Pacific look... Because it's by the sea, and it's the leaves of it...' Similarly, many of the plants in her garden and nearby were of Australian origin, such as wattles and gum trees. The flowers attracted birds, which gave her a sense of pleasure. Overall, her wild garden, which was mostly maintained by her husband, did not give her any particular sense of pride. '[I]t's just something that's just there. I've probably seen better ones, but that's OK. We're quite happy with what we've got.' This sentiment was very close to that of Kathleen Guy. The garden, with its birds, was a place that gave pleasure, but was its own entity. Wild more than domestic, 'just there', this garden did not wholly belong to the gardener.

## Cashmere

The Cashmere Hills (Appendix 4.v) started being settled in the 1890s, and with the extension of the tram service to the foot of the hill in 1898 the pace of this settlement picked up.<sup>60</sup> The

<sup>58</sup> Rona Brunt, interviewed 2 September 2005

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ogilvie, *The Port Hills* (Wellington, 1978), pp.145, 151

population of the area had doubled by 1905,<sup>61</sup> and had drawn to it, as Ogilvie wrote, ‘radicals, Methodists and prohibitionists’.<sup>62</sup> The first homes on Cashmere were developed in 1897 out of Captain Fisher’s property: Herbert Cole’s home was called Te Tahī; Tommy Taylor’s was Whareora. The same year John Macmillan Brown purchased land on the hills. Ogilvie stated that Macmillan Brown lived mostly at Clifton until his wife’s death in 1903, after which time he moved to Cashmere. Strongman did not mention Clifton, describing the shift as simply one of moving from the first Holmbank in Fendalton to the second on Cashmere.<sup>63</sup> Other notables included the Marsh family, who moved to Valley Road after 1905,<sup>64</sup> and Mary Ursula Bethell, from 1924 to 1934, not to mention the Mulgans, and the poet Jessie Mackay.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, the hills were alive with writers, artists and radical thinkers.

Holmbank II, as discussed in Chapter Four, was a model garden for Cashmere, publicised through *The City Beautiful*. Macmillan Brown sponsored the hill gardens competitions. Strongman describes the garden as one fashioned out of a ‘broom-covered hillside masking an old quarry’, which he terraced with grass paths. New Zealand flora comprised about ten per cent of his garden; the many other species were grouped by country of origin. Lily ponds, fruiting bushes and a fern gully were all features of his garden. He experimented with sub-tropical plants<sup>66</sup> and was photographed beside an impressive banana palm.<sup>67</sup> Ngaio Marsh’s garden was also terraced with rocks, featured a mulberry and, according to one visitor, an unusual choice of roses.<sup>68</sup> The house was designed by Samuel Hurst Seager, a cousin of Marsh’s mother.

The Bethell garden at Rise Cottage, on Westenra Terrace, was lovingly described in her poems, published together as *From a Garden in the Antipodes*. In mentioning Bethell’s primroses, Strongman remarked that Bethell found these plants to be out of place in New Zealand where dale and meadow were ‘not understood’.<sup>69</sup> Strongman believed that Bethell’s loyalty was divided between England and New Zealand, and remarked that she probably had no native plants in her garden. This thought, similar to that of Ngaio Marsh discussed in Chapter Four, requires further consideration. In ‘Primavera’ Bethell said

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p.154

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p.149

<sup>63</sup> Thelma Strongman, *The Gardens of Canterbury* (Wellington, 1984), p.158

<sup>64</sup> Ogilvie, p.154

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., pp.158-159

<sup>66</sup> Strongman, pp.158-160

<sup>67</sup> John Macmillan Brown, ‘Professor Macmillan Brown’s Garden at Cashmere’, *CB*, February 1928, p.5

<sup>68</sup> Jennifer Barrer, interviewed 18 November 2005

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p.189; Ursula Bethell, ‘Primavera’ in *From a Garden in the Antipodes* (London, 1929), p.19

I must pass you by, primroses, I must pass you by  
 ... The sight of you here under the apple-tree has too sweet a sting,  
 So like, so unlike the sight of you in an English orchard in spring.

You should not be here, primroses, yet I must have you here...

Not current coin, primroses, but a foreign token...<sup>70</sup>

Like Marsh, Bethell's view was dual. The primroses in her garden were like and unlike primroses in England. If they had an identity, it was impossible to locate. They should not be in her garden, but they had to be there. Out of context, they were not English, but foreign tokens. They evoked more than a memory of England. Indeed, she hinted at 'secret reasons' why she would not go looking for them in English lanes: 'Far beyond dim avenues of planetary space,/ The clue to your sweet look is hid in a celestial place.' Margaret Hillock found that Bethell's 'close identification of the natural world as the illustration of the supernatural world is expressed in natural imagery of the mountains, sea and sky as the 'mirror' of the Holy Spirit.'<sup>71</sup> The conclusion to 'Primavera' makes it clear that the primrose was a cipher for her own sense of dislocation: 'The sight of you here under the apple tree has so sweet a sting,/ —And *in patria*, primrose, *in patria*?' The question *in patria*? leaves open the notion of home. She did not deny that New Zealand was home, nor affirm that home was England.

Likewise, in 'Pause', Bethell explained how she would often look out from her hillside garden to the mountains:

I think how freely the wild grasses flower there,  
 How grandly the storm-shaped trees are massed in their gorges  
 And the rain-worn rocks in magnificent heaps.

Of course she reflected then on her own hillside, drawing a measure of comparison:

It is only a little while since this hillside  
 Lay untrammelled likewise,  
 Unceasingly swept by transmarine winds.

In a very little while, it may be...

The Mother of all will take charge again,  
 And soon wipe away with her elements  
 Our small fond human enclosures.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Bethell, p.19

<sup>71</sup> Margaret Hillock, 'The Poetry of the Numinous: A Study of Imagery in the Poetry of Ursula Bethell' (M.A., University of Canterbury, 1981), p.57

<sup>72</sup> Bethell, 'Pause', in *op. cit.*, p.9

The concern with the 'fugacity' of her gardening efforts here was only one dimension of the poem. The direct relationship drawn between her garden and the mountains, both affected by the same elements, was another. It drew her to the New Zealand environment, but did not necessarily make it her home. In a sense, the garden did not belong. The uncomfortable relationship remained.

Alongside this, Bethell's notion of beauty was very particular. Unlike the larger Fendalton gardens, where nostalgia, serenity and timelessness were apparent, Bethell's created a temporary beauty. In explaining this she adopted a Japanese idiom, matching some of the plants she grew, including both jasmine and honeysuckle.<sup>73</sup> She likened her garden to a Japanese hanging scroll (one specifically used in Japanese tea ceremonies) in her poem 'Kakemono'. 'Lives there still a Japanese artist/Who, with his paint brush, could make us tremble/To see those lines, those tenuous colours/Spring again vibrant as I now see them springing/In their fugacity?'<sup>74</sup> Portraying *ukiyo-e*, or 'pictures of the floating world', her kakemono reflected Kinsey's fascination with the art form.<sup>75</sup> 'Japonism' was probably not specific to the hills, but gardens there did reflect something of the fashion, self-consciously or otherwise.

Cashmere, named after the upland Indian province, has always allowed for a complex perspective on the city. Like Clifton, the view over the Plains places the English Garden City firmly in a profoundly un-English context, and shatters the image. For Sir John Cracroft Wilson the view was reminiscent of the view over the Moradabad Plains, although it lacked groves of mangoes. Around the first Cracroft Wilson house he planted his Indian specimens, including the rhododendrons from which Edgar Stead later removed seeds, without permission.<sup>76</sup>

Hurst Seager designed the second house, further up the hill, built in 1908. The garden around it was sumptuous, with 'terraces going down to the swimming pool, and the lovely trees all round.'<sup>77</sup> Felicity Aitken, a descendant who lived in this house, remembered the garden:

<sup>73</sup> Bethell, 'Appel', p.57. Her jasmine has been propagated by Jennifer Barrer.

<sup>74</sup> Bethell, 'Kakemono', p.33.

<sup>75</sup> Graham Lindsay has remarked that in this poem the art form Bethell referred to was *ukiyo-e*, which, as mentioned, Kinsey collected. Graham Lindsay, 'A Note about Kakemono', <http://www.nzepc.auckland.ac.nz/authors/bethell/lindsay.asp>. Accessed 11 March 2006  
On Kinsey see [www.leafsalon.co.nz/archives/00067festival\\_fugitive.html](http://www.leafsalon.co.nz/archives/00067festival_fugitive.html). Accessed 11 March 2006

<sup>76</sup> Felicity Aitken, interviewed 6 February 2006

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

[T]here was a beautiful magnolia... There were very few native trees. There was a gorgeous *Magnolia campbelli*, down the front by the pool. There were lots of azaleas, and my mother had a beautiful rose garden, a huge vegetable garden, had a cherry cage and all those sorts of things. The orchard ran down the hill onto the next layer down. It was a garden that went down in terraces. It was not a sort of very formal garden, at all, it was just because it was on a hill, and also because we had the two tennis courts. It just had shrubs and lawn... There weren't a lot of rhododendrons. I don't think they would have perhaps liked it. It was very clayey soil... I don't remember that we had any very nice rhododendrons, we just had mostly roses and these terraces. They were rock walls.<sup>78</sup>

Jennifer Barrer later removed bulbs of narcissus and muscari from the garden.<sup>79</sup> The family grew fruit trees on a slope: apples, plums and apricots, as well as raspberries. The vegetable garden was very large. In general, however, the gardens were 'very simple', with 'masses of geraniums'. The pine trees that the Nabob had planted kept the garden very sheltered.

Felicity's mother 'loved the roses', which she was 'always dead-heading'. Her father was not 'especially interested in gardens, and he did always have very good permanent help, you see'. The gardener, Keatly, lived on the property in a gardener's cottage. It was a beautiful garden, but also abundant. It was similar to the Peate garden in Fendalton, differentiated from it principally by topography. Felicity herself had little to do with it.<sup>80</sup> Unfortunately, the Royal New Zealand Airforce accidentally burnt the house down in 1944.<sup>81</sup>

Prue Lovell-Smith moved from the Chatham Islands to Crichton Terrace, Cashmere, in 1936 as an eleven-year-old.<sup>82</sup> The garden on the quarter acre was already established, and 'was a disappointment because it didn't have much lawn'.

[T]here was a glasshouse, where my mother grew cactus. There seemed to be lots of paths and lots of rocks, gravel paths and rocks. And down one side there was a Chatham Island akeake hedge, and at the back there was an oleria hedge, and outside the boundary there were big oak trees, which were a pain for my mother because of the oak leaves. And she had a veggie garden out the back of the house. A large part of it was taken up during the war because of the air raid shelter, which turned out to be a pond. And then my mother also made a gold fish pond, and she had water lilies. She had every kind of flower in the garden, I think. There was a liquid amber, I remember that, and prunus, lots of prunus trees, and down the side there were silver birch trees. It was quite isolated. Next door there was a horse paddock and an orchard.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Jennifer Barrer, interviewed 18 November 2005

<sup>80</sup> Felicity Aitken, interviewed 6 February 2006

<sup>81</sup> Vicky Heward, *Christchurch Heritage Houses* (Christchurch, 2004)

<sup>82</sup> Prue Lovell-Smith, interviewed 25 January 2006

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

Her father remained for the most part on the Chathams, so this garden was maintained entirely by Prue's mother. Initially a 'very wooded section', Prue's mother gradually removed some of the trees to make way for more flower gardens, particularly bulbs and flowering shrubs. Both Prue and her mother grew peonies. Like some of the trees, parts of the lawn were removed to make 'more garden. She was more interested in garden than lawn.'

[T]here was a bit of a lawn down one side round the pond. At the back of the house there was a path coming in from the drive, a concrete path, and there was a lawn one side of that. And that's about all, really. There may have been a bit of lawn when we went there up the top side by the trees, birch trees...<sup>84</sup>

The garden featured rocks and terraces. Prue's mother was 'was always keen on rock gardens, I think. Which may have been the reason she bought the Cashmere house.' She grew 'a lot' of koromiko hedges, 'small ones'. The presence of this native hebe amidst this garden, even as hedging, reflects the fashions promoted in gardening literature of the period. Beauty characterised the garden. 'Ever since I can remember she had a beautiful flower garden.' 'It always seemed to be a beautiful garden'.

There was a large vegetable garden, although her mother was not particularly interested in it. 'It's what people always had, a veggie garden.' In it were

carrots and silverbeet, potatoes, lettuces, tomatoes... And there was a lemon tree there too, a Meyer lemon. And she also had one or two other citrus fruits too in the garden. But I don't ever remember getting much from them. She did better with citrus in Clifton... There was a peach-erine... Yes, I think it was a cross between a nectarine and a peach. I've never seen one since, but it was delicious. And an apple tree or two...<sup>85</sup>

During World War Two the vegetable garden was dug up for the air raid shelter, not the decorative gardens. With the emergency over, it was put back into vegetables. Vegetables were produced, but they were not the priority.

Prue also remembered the garden next door, although most of the area was still rural.

I remember the Wrights' garden above us. The Wrights owned all the land around there. Our house backed onto their drive. And they had extensive lawns up there. And borders, you know, neat borders all around. And I imagine a veggie garden up the back. I can't remember that. But they did have a big orchard, and a big covered cherry orchard, I suppose one would call it. Covered with netting. A. S. Wright was a

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.



solicitor in Christchurch... He always seemed to be picking up cabbage tree leaves and tying them in bundles for the fire.

[H]is garden was lined with oak trees, the bane of my mother's life. But his garden was a big garden because it came off Cashmere Road, and when you came up the drive off the road, on the left was Karitane Hospital. And on the right, his place, and he had a tennis court there, on the foot.<sup>86</sup>

In some respects, therefore, the Wright's garden was similar to the Cracroft Wilson garden.

By the 1940s the population on Cashmere had expanded considerably. Jennifer Barrer, another Cashmere poet, grew up at 99 Hackthorne Road.<sup>87</sup> Her mother was the daughter of Guy and Grace Butler, and had grown up with visits to Jack's Hut in Arthur's Pass.<sup>88</sup> She was a friend of Dorothea Mulgan, mother of John Mulgan, who also lived on Cashmere. The Butlers had also lived on Cashmere in 1923. Grace Butler used to take Jennifer 'away into the bush' to tell her 'about things like fairies'. Jennifer's father was a barrister and solicitor, as well as a mountaineer. He made eight ascents in the Southern Alps. His mother, Nina Barrer, had been an early Canterbury graduate in botany. Mrs Foweraker, later famous locally for her alpine garden, lived opposite the Barrers. Their garden on Hackthorne Road

was a narrow garden, with an arc, with... pink roses. You went through the arc... It had a sandpit at the bottom, it had a top seat where you went and sat. Outside my bedroom window was a prunus tree, with cinerarias underneath it. There was an asparagus bed. There was a bed with lily of the valley in it... There were some hellebores... It had flagstones at one stage. They put them down for a sort of terrace place, that was terribly fashionable to be like that... It was a pretty garden, without being tizzy, with levels, and steps, and it seemed very big, until I went to look at it a while ago, and I couldn't believe how little it was...<sup>89</sup>

Later, they moved up the hill to the appropriately named Four Winds estate, which they established. It was so 'incredibly windy' that the shelter trees they established required protection. The land was mostly in tussock.

[W]e teetered up here from our tiny little eighth of an acre section and I observed my parents working on this land. So at this stage he's put in the first of the pine trees. Then he makes three ponds based on the Capability Brown ideal, with clay, and there's piles of Halswell Quarry stone, so he has that round the edges. Mother being an artist, wants her pond to be neat and tidy, and his is wild and so forth. So you get this amazing contrast of these two people. There they are when they got married in 1935. She's got *Ranunculus lyallii* in her hair and bouquet, which got sent down from Arthur's Pass, because she's grown up at Jack's Hut... Then a few years later my parents had more distinctive gardens. I think this is very symptomatic of that time. Like, men grew gladiolus for instance and Brian, Dad, had his big gladiolus patch.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Jennifer Barrer, interviewed 18 November 2005

<sup>88</sup> See also Grace Adams, *Jack's Hut* (Wellington, 1968)

<sup>89</sup> Jennifer Barrer, interviewed 18 November 2005

And when he was in a good mood he would get bunches of gladiolus and give them to different people.<sup>90</sup>



**Figure 54: Margaret Barrer at Four Winds Estate, Cashmere Hill. Bryan Barrer's gladiolus patch in foreground.**

**Source: Jennifer Barrer Private Collection**

Jennifer remembered that for her parents gardening was 'terribly low key. It's very, very unassuming, and somebody turns up and says oh I've got this, and would you like a bit. It's really lovely. You know, it's not all big deal stuff at all.'

Her parents also owned a holiday home at Arthur's Pass called Tunneller's Cottage. There, in the early 1940s, her mother started developing an alpine garden using celmisias, aricias 'and the different plants'. It was a native alpine garden. The family's relationship with the mountains was profound.

[T]hese Southern Alps have influenced artistic people. It's something... you miss the strength. You miss something about those mountains... It's something about this toughness, and this resilience... I don't see it just as being looking at the mountains, but I need those mountains... I need them because when I look at them I think of also what Dad did, and Mum, in the mountains, and it gives you kind of like a rod in your back, of strength...<sup>91</sup>

This idea that the mountains were somehow related to identity and provided strength again supports the notion that an 'antipodean' sentiment and living on the hills overlapped.

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.



**Figure 55: Margaret Barrer's lily pond, Four Winds Estate, Cashmere Hill**  
**Source: Jennifer Barrer Private Collection**

In 1940, Margaret Barrer helped found the Cashmere Garden Club, and was its president in 1944 and 1945.<sup>92</sup> One of the first members was Prue's mother. Jennifer is certain that one of the main purposes of the club was to provide distraction from the stresses of the war. John Templin, who became part of the Dig for Victory campaign, represented the Canterbury Horticultural Society.<sup>93</sup> Membership of this Club was strong, with 48 members by 1945 and 60 by 1950.<sup>94</sup> The interests of the Club follow the general trends of this chapter. Topics included life in India<sup>95</sup> and 'the gardens of Ceylon', in which 'palms... with a noise like an explosion from a gun open and produce a cascade of white flowers' and the leaves of Jack trees were grown, 'from which the yellow robes of the Buddha monks are dyed.'<sup>96</sup> Italian gardens, Samoan gardens and Japanese gardens were all discussed.<sup>97</sup> Members learned that 'gardening in Japan is hard work as gardens have to be made by gathering the wild, small, & insignificant flowers. These are transplanted, watered manured & cared for till they grow&

<sup>92</sup> CGC Minute Book, 1944-1948, *CGC*

<sup>93</sup> Jo Lewis, *A History of the Cashmere Garden Club* (Christchurch, 1990), p.1

<sup>94</sup> CGC Membership Role, 1944-1953, *CGC*

<sup>95</sup> 5 March 1945, CGC Minute Book, 1944-1948, *CGC*

<sup>96</sup> 20 March 1945, CGC Minute Book, 1944-1948, *CGC*

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 July 1945, and 1 October 1945, 5 August 1946, CGC Minute Book, 1944-1948, *CGC*

become beautiful specimens.’<sup>98</sup> Again, gardening types from different countries were a key interest for these women.

Yet despite this interest in exotic gardening, native and rock gardens also received attention. In 1944, for example, Margaret Barrer ‘showed us some excellent photographs of mountain flowers growing in their native environment.’<sup>99</sup> Films of Arthurs Pass scenery were shown,<sup>100</sup> and members made a point of visiting the rock gardens at Victoria Park where they listened to a talk by Morris Barnett.<sup>101</sup> A rock garden competition began in the mid 1950s under the Club’s auspices. One important member of the Club was Jean Foweraker. She had acquired an interest in alpine plants while visiting England, and established on Hackthorne Road a rock garden. ‘This began as quite a small area but gradually extended over a period of fifty years until it occupied the entire cultivated area – with the exception of the asparagus bed – she was also an asparagus lover!’<sup>102</sup> Joyce Tong, Jean Foweraker’s neighbour on Hackthorne Road, recalled that while she imported some seeds,<sup>103</sup> she always collected seeds of trees or plants, for example on Stewart Island. She had ‘all sorts of different things, but she was fond of the natives.’<sup>104</sup> Many plants from her collection were relocated to the Botanic Gardens, where they can be viewed in Foweraker House. The relationship between rock and hill gardening was exemplified in her work.

## Conclusions

In this chapter the gardeners of Clifton and Cashmere displayed a certain internationalism, a strong identification with the Southern Alps, a weak identification with England and ‘Englishness’, close linkages with each other and a concern with gardening for sustenance and occasionally for environmental protection. Above all, it is the international perspective of the gardeners that stands out. No doubt the most significant resident in this respect was Sir Joseph Kinsey who, as Hugh England remarked, ran a shipping company and was well connected with people all over the world. Nowadays a very great variety of succulents marks the Sumner area out as distinctive. Clearly, such species were unusually common on Clifton – nearly every home on Kinsey Terrace described here at least had one large cactus. The prickly pears mentioned – *Opuntia sp.* – were native to the Americas, although one mentioned in *The*

<sup>98</sup> 1 October 1945, CGC Minutes, 1944-1948, *CGC*

<sup>99</sup> 1 May 1944, CGC Minutes, 1944-1948, *CGC*

<sup>100</sup> 12 October 1944, CGC Minutes, 1944-1948, *CGC*

<sup>101</sup> December 1944, CGC Minutes, 1944-1948, *CGC*

<sup>102</sup> ‘Marget Jane (Jean) Foweraker’, handwritten reminiscences, author unknown, *CGC*

<sup>103</sup> Joyce Tong to Matt Morris, pers. comm., 27 June 2006

<sup>104</sup> Joyce Tong to Matt Morris, pers. comm., 28 June 2006

*City Beautiful* was supposedly Californian.<sup>105</sup> Three had extensive cactus gardens. On Cashmere, the Lovell-Smiths kept cacti in a glasshouse. Cacti do not appear to have been popular on Cashmere, possibly because of the different ecological conditions, and it is reasonable to suppose that in the Cashmere garden the cacti were a familial peculiarity, whereas on Clifton they were commonly grown. Given the timing, it seems equally reasonable to assume that Kinsey introduced these plants into his garden although definitive proof of this is not available. Such were not the only international influences, however. Fern Every's gardening interests were imported from both the American Midwest and from China; Macmillan Brown's garden luxuriated in plants from Asia and the Pacific, and a notably Australian influence persisted for decades.

Native plants seemed to feature in the original Clifton subdivision, and photographs of the Kinsey garden taken c1910 show young cabbage trees, flaxes and hebes in abundance, along with remaining tussocks. Fern's original home on Clifton Terrace was situated next to a bushed valley, the Lovell-Smiths looked out on pohutukawa and kowhai established by their neighbour, and the Guys established a largely native bush garden from 1945. On Cashmere, the Wrights' garden had cabbage trees, the Lovell-Smiths established olearia and koromiko and of course, Macmillan Brown developed a large native garden area. Despite this, these gardens on the hills were in no way predominantly 'native' gardens.

However, they were often intimately linked in the minds of these gardeners with the New Zealand environment. This was largely to do with the vistas available from the hills, of the ocean, and especially of the mountains. Several interviewees voiced sentiments echoing Ngaio Marsh's: 'The Alps are the backbone of the South Island... They are the *leit-motif* of a landscape for full orchestra'<sup>106</sup>, or Bethell's: 'I lift my head sometimes, and look at the mountains,/... it is only a little while since this hillside/Lay untrammelled likewise'.<sup>107</sup> Kinsey had a particular interest in the Southern Alps, as demonstrated by the collection of his photographs of them.<sup>108</sup> Jennifer Barrer was always mindful of the mountains, remembering her forebears who lived amidst them. Indeed, her grandfather, Guy Butler, was one of the foremost contributors on mountain issues to *The City Beautiful*, as seen in Chapter Four. Kathleen's parents were also intimately involved with the mountains, as was she, and this directly influenced her family's gardening choices. She remarked that 'the only other sort of

<sup>105</sup> C. H. Reece, "'Te Kiteroa'", *CB*, November 1928, p.23

<sup>106</sup> Ngaio Marsh, *Black Beech and Honeydew* (London, 2002 ed.), p.80

<sup>107</sup> Bethell, 'Pause', p.90

<sup>108</sup> This collection resides at Cambridge University, Royal Commonwealth Collection.

[http://janus.lib.cam.ac.uk/db/node.xsp?id=CV%2FPers%2FKinsey%2C%20Sir%20Joseph%20James%20\(1852-1936\)%20Knight](http://janus.lib.cam.ac.uk/db/node.xsp?id=CV%2FPers%2FKinsey%2C%20Sir%20Joseph%20James%20(1852-1936)%20Knight). Accessed 12 March 2006

garden I'd be interested in is if we lived in the high country somewhere, and you had a windswept place that had very few things in it. You know, tussocks, and that sort of thing.'<sup>109</sup> For Fern, who also maintained a special relationship with the Alps, her childhood in the Chinese mountains influenced her choice to live on the hill. However, this alpine template did not remain Chinese: she was an active member of the Forest & Bird Society, like Kathleen, and had a passion for native plants (and Maori art<sup>110</sup>). The windswept, igneous landscape was a point of identification with the wider natural world, and especially with the mountains, and its rock gardens, although not hosting exclusively native plants, marked the landscape as uniquely New Zealand. The new perspective afforded by homes on the hills helps explain the sudden attention by the Christchurch gardening media to native plants and alpine degradation in the late 1920s.

Along with an internationalism in which African, American and Australian plants stood out, and a particular attachment to the local environment, these hill side gardens were different from those on the flat in their correspondingly weak links with England. No respondent believed that there was anything especially English about their gardens, even though rock gardening was supposedly an English art form. To a certain extent, however, these gardens did attempt to overlay the expected garden layout on a non-compliant landscape. Front gardens were decorative, even in a garden like the England's which was used almost entirely for economic purposes. Fruit and vegetables were usually at the back of the house. The same was true for homes on either side of Kinsey Terrace, so that the entrance to the home was decorative whether it was above or below the house. The most difficult gardens, the Bassett's, for example, could not grow vegetables due to steepness and difficulty of irrigation, but where conditions were easier the usual rules applied. Lawns were not a usual feature in the early part of the period, although by the 1950s new families might try to establish them, as did the Lovell-Smiths and the Brunts. Both did this for their children, the former managing to create on Clifton what her own mother had not created on Cashmere: a reminder not of England but of her expansive Chatham Islands childhood. The Brunts soon found the lawn too difficult and returned it to a 'wild' state. English gardens were not a key reference point for these hillside gardeners, and local knowledge of conditions and plants was often more important than other sources.

The gardens of the hills examined here were undoubtedly more eclectic than the gardens of the preceding two chapters. None of them clung to an ideal of abundance: this was clearly not an abundant environment. Many did, however, express ideals of beauty. Some were

<sup>109</sup> Kathleen Guy, interviewed 2 September 2005

<sup>110</sup> Arthur Gray, 'Drifting Along: Art and Patronage', *North & South*, November 2005, pp.21-22



extremely fashionable, notably the first Lovell-Smith home on Cashmere, and the two gardens of the Barrer family. Prue's mother was far more interested in beautifying than growing food, preferring to sacrifice the latter function over the former in time of supposed emergency. As a foundation member of the Cashmere Garden Club she helped project these ideals into the local milieu. Jennifer's mother, also a foundation member of the Club, helped create a beautiful garden on Hackthorne Road, the terrace of which was 'terribly fashionable'. Her part of the garden at Four Winds was an artist's garden, with an orderly, highly ornamental lily pond. Jennifer's father was also influenced by notions of beauty, even creating a small lake ('pond') on what was meant to be a Capability Brown ideal. Not only is this the only reference to Brown in the interviews conducted for this thesis, but it is the only reference to any name designer other than Buxton, also mentioned by Jennifer in relation to the second Cracroft Wilson garden (apparently incorrectly). Although the principles of the lake might have related to Brown, the garden at Four Winds was no way particularly park-like, making the allusion difficult to sustain. Nevertheless, the reference to one of the most important English landscapers is noteworthy. Also noteworthy are the many mentions of ponds, particularly lily ponds, in the gardens both of Cashmere and Clifton. Although none of the interviewees made the link, such water gardens constitute the most direct evidence of the penetration of Japanese aesthetics into Christchurch gardens. Macmillan Brown consciously introduced Japanese features into Holmbank II, as did Buxton in some of his designs. Bethell conceived of her garden in *ukiyo-e* terms: beautiful but temporary. Otherwise, the lily ponds appear as delightful garden elements devoid of Japanese associations.

While some of these gardens were undoubtedly beautiful, some were also motivated by environmental protection. The Guys showed this most obviously, ultimately creating a native bush, but many other gardeners, for example the Brunts, were also interested in encouraging native birds. A far more important trope on the hills, however, was the measure of sustenance they afforded. This could be spiritual or physical, or both. Of the spiritual, hinted at by Bethell in her reference to 'a celestial place', and by Marsh, the uplifting relationship with the mountains mentioned by Fern, Kathleen and Jennifer, and deeply felt by their parents (Fern's parents were missionaries in the Chinese mountains) is the most directly articulated. None mentioned Maungatere (Mt Grey) and its Maori associations as 'a mountain that captures the notions of life, growth and death,'<sup>111</sup> but the Alps did offer a notion of strength and, in visits, a place of communion. Hill gardens also provided physical sustenance, as a source of revenue. On Clifton, this was usually by flower growing for the market, as with the Bassetts, Shillitos, Englands and the former owners of the Lovell-Smith property. It could also be

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<sup>111</sup> Te Maire Tau, 'Ngai Tahu and the Canterbury Landscape', in Cookson and Dunstall (eds), p.45

through food production, as with Fern and the Englands, who saw their gardens purely as food-growing units. The idea that the garden could sustain, even if only fleetingly, deeply affected these gardeners of the hills whose perspective on Christchurch was so starkly different from the gardens of the 'flat'.



## Conclusion

Home gardening in Christchurch, as elsewhere, has never been a straightforward activity devoid of economic, political, social and cultural content, and it has never fully ‘conquered’ the environment. In some instances home gardeners sought to redefine the environment: to imprint the unsavoury, or at least ugly, swamp with nostalgic motifs from an imagined, idealised British past. Some sought to claim the environment, to integrate themselves into what they perceived to be their ecological context. Many did both, using their gardens as ‘antipodean’ spaces with undefined identities. For most, gardens enabled the persistence of Miles Fairburn’s arcadia of natural abundance or, in more difficult times, sustenance in an increasingly unfruitful lost paradise.

The image of paradise – whether found or lost – remained potent throughout the period under review in this thesis, and arguably remains so today. Paradise, a Persian word meaning ‘garden’, has truly been a powerful metaphor for New Zealanders, and home gardens have been the most obvious material expression of it. One premise for this thesis was that the garden, particularly the vernacular garden, is a physical expression of the relationship between nature and culture. A second premise was that lay rituals in such gardens afforded a position from which to view that relationship. A third was that certain kinds of lay rituals, those sponsored by the upholders of social order, could overlay certain gardens with meanings. These were then ‘emplacements’ – sites promoting a particular power relationship: ‘heterotopias’ exemplifying dominant social forces. Pursuing this line of reasoning would therefore allow an answer from Christchurch to Michel Conan’s proposition that ‘[s]paces of ritualized garden practice embody cultural propensities... [S]uch propensities may contribute either to the reproduction of the social order, and of shared cultural beliefs; or may, in different circumstances, be conducive to cultural change.’<sup>1</sup> In Christchurch, from the beginning of European colonisation, the local holders of political power supported and examined Christchurch gardeners and their gardens. Horticultural exhibitions and garden competitions were always quasi-civic rituals. Winners were elevated to a new status, and their gardens were exemplars, meant to be visited and learned from. That such competitions were intended to assist in the ‘reproduction of the social order, and of shared cultural beliefs’ is, to my mind, beyond dispute.

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<sup>1</sup> Michel Conan, ‘Concluding Remarks’ (Symposium on Lay Ritual Practices in Gardens and Landscapes, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C., 2003)

Ultimately, the first half of Conan's proposition, that pertaining to Christchurch, cannot be tested. One would need to establish whether the social and cultural order would fall down if its garden emplacements disappeared. If this is pushing Conan too far, one would at least need to establish the extent to which garden emplacements *contribute*, as he says, to the maintenance of the social and cultural order. How much weaker the state would be if they disappeared is impossible to establish. In Conan's example, these emplacements contributed to social change, a positive test.<sup>2</sup> For Christchurch, no such test cases are available: unlike eighteenth century France, no equivalent radical social or cultural change has ever taken place. Identifying causes for the absence of change over time is a methodological issue for social historians, who are interested in continuities as much as change.

This thesis therefore has sought to identify some areas in which the role of gardens in maintaining order is clear. It has been possible to establish that the holders of local political power in Christchurch *believed* that particular kinds of gardens served this purpose. The first part of this thesis has sought to analyse gardening discourse and identified four main themes between 1851 and 1954: abundance, beauty, protection and sustenance. These themes are reflected in other areas of New Zealand activity and no doubt those of other places as well. They are standard tropes. In this instance, however, they were promoted in sequence over the century from European colonisation by a number of organisations, and by none as vigorously as the Canterbury Horticultural Society. Abundant gardens, beautiful gardens, native and rock gardens and workers'/ 'victory' gardens were all in turn identified as actual embodiments of virtues enshrined in gardening agendas. As such, all of these gardens were imbued with the properties of 'paragons', and became 'little paradises'. One can see in this process a deliberate attempt to manifest particular values underpinning the established order.

In interpreting this finding, this thesis has suggested positive correlations between gardening ideals and expressions of power. The first of these relates to the promotion of the abundance trope in the expropriation of land from local Maori. The second relates the promotion of beautification to the wresting of self-sufficiency from workers, a consequence of the first. The wetland environment contained a network of culturally and economically important Ngai Tahu sites. Local Ngai Tahu, who were very few in number by 1849, drew mana from these sites. They were Ngai Tuahuriri 'emplacements' – sites with 'certain cultural propensities'. Some, such as Putaringamotu, even had rituals associated with them. This last, and Otautahi,

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<sup>2</sup> Michel Conan, 'Royal Gardens, Fashionable Promenades and Public Opinion in 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Paris' (Symposium on Lay Ritual Practices in Gardens and Landscapes, Dumbarton Oaks, Washington D.C., 2003)

another important site, quickly became the model gardens of abundance for the first European colonists. Other Ngai Tahu sites were overwritten in various ways, some with gardens. This was not unique to Christchurch; the same phenomenon had happened under William Wakefield's influence at Pipitea/ Wellington in 1840.<sup>3</sup> European abundance overwrote indigenous abundance; in Christchurch the Canterbury Association's agent, and the Horticultural Society that was his personal interest, aided this. It was essential that the colonists be able to eat, but it was equally critical that the wetlands be established as Association space, and not as Ngai Tahu space. This was particularly necessary because Ngai Tahu had expressed dissatisfaction with European appropriation of their land as early as 1849. The ideal of abundant gardens assisted in this process.

Highly productive home gardens posed a problem in a settlement whose economy was based on primary production. With the influx of railway labour from 1863 came a desire to set cottagers to gardening, but for amateur entrants of horticultural exhibitions in both Christchurch city and in the Sydenham Borough flowers and pot plants were celebrated ahead of fruit and vegetables. Food crops were the province of professionals at these shows. For most home gardeners the idea promoted was, from the 1860s, to beautify. The move of the horticultural societies of the 1860s constituted a new attempted colonisation of the landscape, from European abundance to fruitless beauty. If keeping a tidy and visible front garden and a good back garden was also a sign of respectability, the work involved entailed the creation of 'moral landscapes', as posited in Chapter One.

In these ways, the purpose of garden emplacements in maintaining the social and cultural order is clear. Two tests indicate the relative success of these attempts. The first is that in certain parts of the city very localised 'competition cultures' materialised. This is especially the case in Fendalton from the 1930s. In other words, where being fashionable mattered, winning garden competitions mattered as well. The competitions helped define a particular identity in a particular neighbourhood. By this test, one can see a localised level of reproduction of the social and cultural order through the competitions.

The second test is that potentially unsettling garden forms were rapidly co-opted by the Horticultural Society and reworked. As in the 1850s, vegetable growing was promoted in the early 1930s and in 1944 to 45, then promptly dropped. More tellingly, composting – the promoters of which bought into an explicitly radical agenda – was also co-opted by civic authorities and utilised throughout the war. I have argued that this was not to do with

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<sup>3</sup> Philippa Mein Smith, *A Concise History of New Zealand* (Cambridge, 2005), p.57

promoting compost at a time of fertility emergency, rather it was keeping a lid on a message potentially unsettling at a time of governmental fragility. This is because the message was about the right use of land, the basis of economic and political power. Public space and time were allowed to the movement, and it spread quickly. However, at the end of the war this was shut down immediately. By this second test, one can see attempts to prevent alternative agendas gaining a foothold via actual garden spaces. These negative tests indicate the power of competitions to generate reproductions of an ideal, while also excluding those who saw in the garden possibilities for establishing a new mode of society.

The process of depositing particular meanings on particular sites by ritual-like activity was meant to induce the multiplication of such sites by the power of example. This thesis has shown that such a hegemonic intention was seldom realised, and that its efficacy varied throughout the city. For house-buyers, advertisements that mentioned gardens were more likely to mention orchards or fruit than any other feature from the 1880s until World War One, despite attempts on the part of gardening organisations to promote ‘beauty’ over function from the 1860s. It is certainly noteworthy, however, that the commencement of annual home garden competitions from World War One coincided with a changed emphasis by real estate agents from production to beauty. This was expressed chiefly in the form of the lawn, a powerful sales feature from World War One onwards, and the pre-eminent feature from the 1920s. Although home garden competitions were not especially well supported in the mid 1920s, property advertisements did show an expanded interest in garden features from this time. Property advertisements maintained this expanded interest into the 1950s. The analysis of these advertisements shows that from about 1915 real estate agents made the most of gardening fashions in their advertisements, believing from this time, and especially from the 1920s, that fashion was more important than function.

The same analysis showed that fashion was more likely to matter in the north-west part of the city than anywhere else. Papanui, St Albans, Merivale and Fendalton were clearly places where fashion could sell. Spreydon was also a good gardening suburb by this evidence: it was in the top three listings for fruit, lawns, flowers and vegetables. Native plants rarely featured as selling points, but when they did it was for Fendalton or Papanui, or on the hills. Rockeries were also scarcely mentioned across the period, and were more likely to be found on the hills than on the flat. These advertisements do not show residential segregation of the sort tested for by Mike Smith, but they do show residential variation. To an extent, it is a variation similar to that found in a close study of local gardening literatures.

To provide some depth to this understanding of variation, three case study areas were selected inductively from the analysis of Christchurch gardening literatures and the property advertisements. All three areas showed indications of variation. Two were situated adjacent to each other; the third some distance away. All three, however, were created in very different ecological contexts. Riccarton was remnant kahikatea swamp forest, with pockets of heavy clay and sand. Fendalton also contained wetland association, but was not as low-lying and never as wet as Riccarton, although it was characterised by numerous small streams. Clifton and Cashmere were situated on the hills, the remains of a volcanic crater rim, exposed to the north west winds, above the frost line and with markedly different contours. Although subdivision in Riccarton and Fendalton began much earlier than Clifton and Cashmere, in all of these areas suburban subdivision took off in the 1920s, following the general pattern of post-war suburban expansion.

In each of these studies about ten people participated, usually referring to more than one garden in detail and frequently offering comments on the gardens of their area generally. In this way the overall sample size of described gardens was considerably more than John Hammetter's seventeen gardens for Milwaukee. These descriptions therefore fleshed out and added considerable depth to the data supplied by real estate advertisements. Internal consistency within the sample areas indicated the validity of this approach, and enabled the construction of generalisations about the gardens of those areas. Where possible, written and photographic records supplemented these accounts. In each case, internal consistency did not mean homogeneity within the entire area. Participants identified certain boundaries within the areas. This suggests that testing segregation strictly by suburb – really an arbitrary construct – may not reveal the true nature of residential segregation. Neighbourhoods do appear to have identities at variance with one another. Indeed, it is worth noting that variation is probably a more useful explanatory concept for a Christchurch social history than segregation, which is surely never likely to exist in a pure form. Variation, as this thesis shows, can be quite marked.

This thesis discussed Riccarton starting with the original Riccarton estate and spreading out to take in the estates south of Riccarton Road. This is not a true suburb, but rather a conceptual unit; the Deans property is now part of Fendalton, although its positioning there is awkward. Within this conceptual unit, a division was clearly discernable along Riccarton Road. The properties south of Riccarton Road were modest and tidy, the Deans properties appeared more leisurely. This was the case the further towards the Avon Stream one travelled. To the south, gardens were predominantly subsistence gardens, although the street frontage was usually in flowers and lawn. Gardeners understood that the vegetable production area should be 'male'

and the front garden should be 'female', but circumstance often prevented strict adherence to this division. There was little or no interest in native plants in the area. Soil fertility maintenance, however, was a preoccupation, with manure and green crops applied, and trenching common. Clay soils could be acid, and require lime. They might require annual tilling, or, in cases where the soil was especially heavy, raised beds might be constructed above ground. In other parts of Riccarton peat soils were easy to work with. Social conformity of a particular type predominated, with low front fences and very few trees. In some cases fruit trees might be removed as it was thought the sections were not large enough for them. Establishing trees, conversely, could be considered a radical action. Mostly, there was a certain kind of transparency with these gardens; householders laid them out for all to see, and invited judgement.

North of Riccarton Road, properties of the original Riccarton estate were quite different. Some of these had stream boundaries, along which native plants were sometimes established, emulating the remains of the original swamp forest. The original ecological association showed through. Many also had the remains of European trees planted by Jane Deans. Gardens could include verdant lawns and very large beds of dahlias and other fashionable flowers, and professional help might be consulted. Rhododendrons and azaleas abounded, especially under the influence of Edgar Stead of Ilam. Hedge trimming was a constant task for many men in the area, where frontages were frequently not exposed to the street. Large trees were commonplace. To a considerable extent, however, these gardens were nevertheless used as productive spaces, with large beds of vegetables and areas for fruit growing. Here, gardens were beautiful, but they were also critical for food provisioning. Section sizes were seldom larger than those further south, but they were very differently regarded. Again, while gender roles were clearly understood, few households adhered to them.

The gardens within the original Rural Section 18, Fendall's property, were different from those carved out of the Deans estate. The major difference was size. Another major difference was the kind of labour involved in maintenance. Often professional gardeners were employed, and sometimes these were involved in highly technical tasks such as plant breeding on site. Very large trees featured. Sometimes native plants were established alongside streams. Such gardens were the epitome of the suburban arcadia desired by many settlers, and were owned by successful artisans and professionals. To the children of such households the gardens were places of leisure and amusement, and not usually sites of labour. Men took pride in mowing immaculate lawns with state-of-the-art technology; theirs was indeed Belich's 'ritual harvest'. Women might be involved in actual harvesting of food, although they could expect help with this from paid staff. While beautiful and idyllic, these were also highly productive economic

units. Vegetable and fruit gardens were commonly extensive. Unlike those gardens outside of this particular area, however, the sense was far more one of abundance than of sustenance. There was no obvious sign of hardship. In the northern part of Fendalton, by contrast, gardens were more like those in the south part of Riccarton. Some were even state homes. Such gardens were smaller, frequently exposed to the street with low concrete fences, and featured the usual front lawn with flower borders and a backyard full of vegetables and fruit. Such smaller gardens could also feature trees, something not deemed out of place here as in parts of Riccarton. Many Fendalton gardens, regardless of their size, incorporated very fashionable elements. Amongst these were cactus gardens, rock work and ferneries. Access to a wider pool of gardening knowledge than family and neighbours seems to have contributed to a more fluid gardening culture than in Riccarton. Fendalton gardens, or parts thereof, were more likely to change according to fashion and new advice. Finally, men and women were more likely to comply with gender divisions.

Gardens of the hills showed some similarities with those on the flat. Harsh winds necessitated macrocarpa hedges, so common throughout Christchurch. Many gardens had a decorative garden by the front of the house and a productive fruit or vegetable garden further towards the back. Some gardens even had small lawns. In other respects, however, these gardens were completely different. The abundance of rocks and the steepness combined suggested terraces, paths, rock walls and rock gardens. With these came opportunities for lily ponds. The very different climate prompted flower growing for the market, and food crops could also be quite different, with citrus, tamarillos, passionfruit and other frost tender plants commonly grown, particularly on Clifton. Where the Deans brothers had found strawberries difficult to grow in damp Riccarton, these grew with ease on the hill. Gardeners of Clifton and Cashmere were more likely to enjoy native plants self-consciously, but they were equally likely to enjoy other types as well. Apart from the different food crops possible, some gardeners of Clifton, especially around the Kinsey estate, developed an intense interest in cactus growing, and southern and western African plants were unusually commonplace. Australian trees and shrubs seemed to persist for longer in these areas than on the flat.

It is tempting to view the gardens of the hills as hankering to be *avant garde*. This is no doubt partially true; Cashmere gardens were likely to be fashionable, charming, beautiful but ‘low key’, while Clifton gardens were frequently eccentric. However, this perspective is somewhat limited. The view from the hills offered an on-going redefinition of what living in Christchurch meant. Gardeners often had an international perspective. Yet they were equally confronted with grand vistas, particularly of the Alps and the ocean, and this seems to have affected their identity. These gardeners were far more likely to draw a relationship between

their own gardening efforts and wider natural processes beyond the city than other gardeners were. In this is the most obvious reason that Christchurch seemed to lag behind the other New Zealand centres in embracing native plants. Hilled settlements could not sustain warped impressions of Englishness. Gardens on Clifton and Cashmere were in no way abundant. Occasionally environmental protection motivated gardeners, but usually it was the need for sustenance. This could be a purely economic sustenance, difficult given the physical conditions, or spiritual, with strength drawn from the vista itself. Environment impinged on identity most explicitly in these gardens.

These case studies therefore show the existence of variation across Christchurch of residential perceptions and gardening experiences. The four themes expressed in Christchurch gardening literature over the period were all given life in gardens, to varying extents, but the intensity of their expression differed by neighbourhood. In most gardens, food production mattered ahead of other concerns, although depending on relative economic security food gardens could suggest either abundance or sustenance.

At the outset, this thesis posed a dual problem for historians of the urban environment: urban environmental historians lament their lack of knowledge about ecological foundations of cities, and urban environmentalists lament their lack of attention to the ways social and cultural systems impinge on the environment. This thesis has attempted to bridge that gap, by anchoring the development of Christchurch's gardens in their ecological, social and cultural contexts. It has sought to show the power ideas can have on environmental modification, identifying these ideas and showing how they were expressed through the media and fostered by organisations in alliance with local government. It has accepted the notion that culture can be observed through rituals, and examined those rituals that privileged particular modes of gardening. It has sought out the relationship between such rituals and general gardening practice, arguing that while a strong relationship is generally thought to have existed, in fact the relationship was mostly weak except in certain parts of the city. To a large extent, this was due to the varying apparatuses for distributing knowledge and ideas: for most people gardening information came through local contacts and not from horticultural publications or professionals. While plants and certain aspects of form changed over time, in most gardens their use remained remarkably static over the first hundred years, despite the massive growth in population, suburban expansion and actual numbers of gardens.

Their meanings, or their significance, however, did change, and here the physical spaces occupied by gardens mattered. If culture could be observed in Christchurch through its garden rituals, environmental factors were asserted in this process. On the flat the original ecological



associations and topography had a slight effect on gardens, although streams became features and in some instances suggested native plantings, particularly close to Riccarton Bush. Soil variations gave the gardens of the north west, and parts of the south and south east, a particular advantage. Much of the rest of the city, including Riccarton, was on soils of moderate quality. This obviously affected what could be achieved. The most clearly environmental effect, however, came with suburban encroachment onto the hills, with their moderate to poor soil quality, especially in Clifton. It is significant that this development occurred at the same time as access to the alpine areas near Christchurch improved dramatically. A direct knowledge of the mountain environment, married with a constant view of it across the city, and a domestic terrain reflecting it, combined to establish new gardening forms, but also new perceptions of identity. These gardeners appeared to have a different sense of themselves from those on the flat. Their perspective was antipodean, and their gardens, with such pronounced plurality of influence, underscore this point. Garden competitions engaged with these new gardens, incorporating them within the ambit of the horticultural societies. Environment here impinged on culture.

What, then, does this study contribute to the field of urban environmental history? On one level it shows how ecological variations across an apparently homogeneous landscape impacted significantly on the ways in which gardeners chose to interact with their environment. On another level, it also demonstrates the value of urban environmental history to the new histories of former colonies, highlighting the perceived relationship between discourses of environmental use and the expression of power over landscape and peoples. I say perceived relationship because resistances – both explicit and implicit – remained, in this study at least, surprisingly common. Whereas control over agricultural lands in this sense is obviously central to the maintenance of political and economic power, this study shows that back and front yard gardening has also been drawn into such discussions. Urban environmental histories of empire will continue to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the ways in which the exercise of colonial power functioned in colonies. In Christchurch, while official gardening discourses were intended as part of this process, actual gardening efforts reflected the primacy of economic potentials, aspiration and environmental factors in a Garden City.

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6/8 1495	W. Wilson to Land Office, 7 June 1852
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7/7 b2 Item 9, Folder D	'Conditions of Sale', 20 April 1852
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22/19	Botanic Gardens History
22/26	Flower Gardening
22/23	Ferns and Ferneries, 1932
22/61	Canterbury Centennial Flower Show, 1949-1951
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Mahinga Kai

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DP No.	Location	Year
<b>Sydenham</b>		
2	Gasson St South	1863
53	Bath St	1875
63	Lower Lincoln Rd	1875
544	Brougham St	1881



**Clifton Hill/ Monck's Bay**

2012	Mulgans Track/ Kinsey Tce	1903
4704	Main Rd	1904
1980	Christchurch-Sumner Rd/ Alexandra Tce/ Tuawera Tce	1904
2192	Clifton Tce	1906
2622	Panorama Tce/ Clifton Tce	1906
2401	Main Rd	1907
1747	Christchurch-Lyttelton Rd/ Nayland St	1907
2449	Christchurch-Lyttelton Rd	1907
3029	Mulgans Track/ Kinsey Tce	1909
3201	Clifton Tce	1911
4037	Clifton Tce / Zig Zag/ Nayland St	1913
5032	Mulgans Track/ Kinsey Tce/ Main Rd	1914
4166	Clifton Tce	1914
4578	Clifton Tce	1915
5230	Clifton Tce	1916
5154	Clifton Tce	1918
5512	Mulgans Track	1920
6674	Clifton Tce	1920
5894	Nayland St	1921
8594	Christchurch-Lyttelton Rd	1925
7436	Kinsey Tce	1925
9407	Christchurch-Sumner Rd/ Alexandra Tce	1929
11596	Nayland St	1937
11526	Main Rd	1939
11979	Sumner Rd	1941
12567	Cliff St/ Main Rd	1944
14637	Tuawera Tce	1949
15360	Clifton Tce	1950
15255	Kinsey Tce / Tuawera Tce	1950
15994	Panorama Tce	1951
16280	Main Rd	1952
16525	Cliff St/ Main Rd	1952
16812	Clifton Tce	1952
17995	Kinsey Tce/ Main Rd	1954

**Avon Loop**

59	Barbadoes St/ Nova Pl/ Kilmore St	1875
281	Kilmore St/ Hurley St/ Oxford Tce	1875
174	Barbadoes St / armagh	1877
432	Bangor St/ Oxford Tce	1878
1222	North Town Belt/ East Town Belt/ Cambridge Tce	1894
1440	North Town Belt / Otley St/ Barbadoes St	1898
1785	Madras St/ Chester St/ Armagh St	1902
1765	Madras St / Melrose St/ Moa St	1902

1972	Bangor St/ Oxford Tce	1903
2571	Barbadoes St/ Kilmore St	1908
3349	Chester St East/ Oxford Tce	1912
3661	Barbadoes St / Otley St	1913
4710	Ely St/ Salisbury St	1916
4777	Peterborough St/ CambridgeTce	1917
4828	Peterborough St/ CambridgeTce	1917
4801	Peterborough St	1917
5833	Salisbury St	1918
5205	Chester St East	1919
5138	Chester St East / Barbadoes St	1919
5189	Bealey Ave/ churchill	1919
5583	Barbadoes St / Armagh St	1920
5263	Salisbury St / Barbadoes St	1920
5779	Bealey Ave/ Churchill St	1920
5953	Chester St East / Barbadoes St	1920
6023	Chester St East / Barbadoes St	1921
5975	Peterborough St	1921
5948	Barbadoes St / Bealey Ave	1921
5987	Madras St/ Melrose St/ Bealey Ave	1921
6248	Melrose St/ Barbadoes St	1922
6868	Peterborough St / Madras St	1923
7937	Salisbury St / Madras St	1923
6752	Bealey Ave/ Otley St / Barbadoes St	1923
7059	Fitzgerald Ave/ Elm St	1924
6912	Madras St / Armagh St	1924
7092	Moa St	1924
7933	Barbadoes St/ Salisbury St / CambridgeTce	1924
7685	Hurley St/ Bangor St	1924
7562	Madras St/ CambridgeTce	1925
7567	Salisbury St / Madras St	1925
7418	Salisbury St / CambridgeTce	1925
10407	CambridgeTce / Churchill St / Fitzgerald Ave	1925
7495	Hurley St/ Bangor St	1925
8090	Chester St East	1926
8052	CambridgeTce	1926
8103	Dawson St	1926
8409	Ely St	1927
8596	Melrose St	1927
8341	Dawson St	1927
8881	Fitzgerald Ave / Chester St East	1928
8921	Melrose St/ Barbadoes St	1928
8747	Melrose St	1928
8944	Melrose St	1928
8878	Bangor St / Kilmore St	1928
9613	Armagh St/ Fitzgerald Ave	1929
10421	Madras St / Melrose St / Moa St	1929
9905	Madras St / Moa St / Ely St	1930
9796	Bealey Ave/ Otley St/ Barbadoes St	1930
10300	Moa St/ Melrose St	1933

10890	Bealey Ave / Fitzgerald Ave	1936
10860	Bangor St/ Oxford Tce/ Rees St	1936
10844	Bangor St / Kilmore St/ Oxford Tce	1936
11205	Bealey Ave/ Otley St/ Barbadoes St	1937
11909	Ely St	1940
12073	Bangor St/ Rees St/ Oxford Tce	1941
14177	Kilmore St	1948
14443	Melrose St/ Barbadoes St	1949
16416	Melrose St/ Barbadoes St	1952

### **Fendalton**

448	Fendalton Rd	1880
493	Wairarapa Tce	1880
730	Glandovey Rd/ Lloyd St/ Strowan Rd	1882
703	Plynlimon Rd	1882
1626	Leinster Rd	1899
2120	Idris Rd/ Fendalton Rd / Wroxton Tce	1905
2238	Garden Rd	1905
2201	Leinster Rd	1905
2642	Idris Rd/ Kenilworth Rd	1907
2352	Idris Rd/ Selwyn Rd	1907
2411	Jacksons Rd/ Fendalton Rd	1907
2716	Selwyn Rd	1909
3015	Idris Rd/ Wairarapa Tce	1910
3122	Wroxton Tce	1910
3123	Idris Rd	1910
3278	Idris Rd/ Wairarapa Tce	1911
3517	Jacksons Rd / Wroxton Tce	1912
3355	Jacksons Rd / Fendalton Rd	1912
4677	Wroxton Tce	1913
4132	Leinster Rd	1914
5160	Heaton St	1919
6101	Wairarapa Strm / Snowdon Rd/ Idris Rd	1921
6696	Snowdon Rd / Idris Rd	1921
6965	Idris Rd/ Plynlimon Rd	1924
7450	Bradnor Rd/ Wairarapa Tce	1925
8918	To Wairarapa Strm	1925
7737	Idris Rd/ Glandovey Rd	1925
7973	Glandovey Rd / Idris Rd / Wairarapa Strm	1926
8181	Elmwood Rd	1926
9548	Leinster Rd	1926
8508	Glandovey Rd	1927
9775	Allister Ave	1927
9139	Fulton Ave	1928
10113	Jacksons Rd	1931
10466	Allister Ave	1934
10670	Idris Rd / Wroxton Tce/ Wairarapa Strm	1935
10746	Park Lane	1936
10811	Glandovey Rd	1935

10861	Clifford Ave/ Wroxton Tce/ Fendalton Rd	1936
11108	Garden Rd	1937
11728	Clifford Ave	1939
11938	Plynlimon Rd	1940
12326	Garden Rd/ Wairarapa Strm and Tce	1942
13069	Idris Rd / Glandovey Rd	1946
13790	Wroxton Tce / Wairarapa Strm	1947
14028	Clifford Ave	1948
14044	Idris Rd	1948
15549	Idris Rd / Wairarapa Strm	1950
14757	Wairarapa Strm / Wroxton Tce	1950
15966	Jacksons Rd / Wroxton Tce	1951
15774	Poynder Ave/ Wairarapa Strm	1951
16092	Idris Rd	1951
16049	Rossall St	1951
16134	Jacksons Rd / Fendalton Rd	1952
16596	Maunsell St	1952
16890	Idris Rd/ Wairarapa Strm	1953
16832	Wairarapa Tce	1953
17782	Snowdon Rd/ Wairarapa Tce	1954
18410	Leinster Rd	1955

#### **North Linwood**

420	Gloucester St	1879
421	Armagh St	1879
871	Trent St/ Armagh St/ England St	1887
1133	Stanmore Rd	1894
1252	Brittan St	1895
1532	Linwood Ave	1899
1770	Gloucester St	1901
2574	Tancred St	1905
2083	Worcester St	1905
2276	England St	1906
2332	Gloucester St	1906
2896	Stanmore Rd	1907
2425	Gloucester St	1907
2549	England St	1908
2632	Rochester St	1908
2620	Surrey St	1908
2754	Woodhouse St	1909
2885	Woodham Rd	1910
4792	Gloucester St	1917
5474	Stanmore Rd/ Armagh St	1919
5210	Worcester St	1919
5327	Gloucester St	1920
5751	Armagh St	1920
6351	Tancred St	1922
6549	Gloucester St	1922
6213	Gloucester St	1922

6733	Woodham Rd	1923
6794	Woodham Rd	1924
7604	Gloucester St	1925
7536	Woodham Rd	1925
8076	Woodham Rd	1925
7828	Avonside Dr	1925
8220	Linwood Ave	1926
8119	Armagh St	1926
8643	Brittan St	1927
8560	Gloucester St	1927
8776	Trent St	1927
9218	Linwood Ave	1928
9447	Stanmore Rd	1929
9437	Trent St	1929
9776	Trent St/ Worcester St	1930
9675	Tancred St	1930
10444	Armagh St	1934
10452	Brittan St	1935
10666	Brittan St	1935
10516	Woodham Rd	1935
10984	Gloucester St	1936
11373	Tancred St	1936
10946	Linwood Ave	1936
10832	Gloucester St	1936
11354	Armagh St / England St	1938
11413	Rochester St	1938
11625	Woodham Rd	1939
11541	Surrey St	1939
12070	Stanmore Rd	1941
12814	Gloucester St	1942
12444	Worcester St	1944
12688	England St	1945
13024	England St	1946
13695	Tancred St	1947
13608	Rochester St	1947
13951	Gloucester St	1948
16762	Worcester St	1952
16834	Gloucester St	1953
17651	Stanmore Rd / Gloucester St	1954
17568	England St	1954
17813	Woodham Rd	1954

### **Riccarton**

358	Riccarton Rd/Wainui St	1879
552	Riccarton Rd/ Clarence St/Picton Ave	1879
1307	Elizabeth St/ Division St/ Clarence St	1897
1883	Elizabeth St/ Division St/ Clarence St	1903
2052	Division St/ Rotherham St/ Clarence St	1904
2438	Riccarton Rd/ Manor Rd. Euston St/ Wharenuui Rd	1907

2470	Middleton Rd/ Field Tce	1907
2445	Puriri St	1907
2681	Hinau St	1908
3360	Riccarton Rd	1911
3884	Riccarton Rd	1913
4829	Riccarton Rd	1917
6079	Puriri St	1921
5888	Peveral St/ Piko Cres/ Wharenuui Rd	1921
6500	Hinau St	1922
6424	Konini St	1922
6617	Field Tce	1923
7923	Clyde Rd	1923
6918	Hinau St	1924
7098	Hinau St	1924
7511	Totara St	1925
7730	Konini St	1925
8303	Elizabeth St	1926
7942	Rata St	1926
8800	Riccarton Rd	1927
8340	Kotare St	1927
9386	Kotare St	1927
9099	Totara St	1928
8749	Clyde Rd	1928
9104	Wharenuui Rd	1928
9300	Totara St	1929
9564	Riccarton Rd	1929
9819	Puriri St	1930
9721	Puriri St	1930
9968	Riccarton Rd	1930
9725	Ratray St/ Wainui St	1930
10273	Ratray St	1930
10186	Riccarton Rd	1932
10262	Wainui St	1933
10241	Riccarton Rd	1933
10493	Riccarton Rd	1934
10720	Rata St	1935
10892	Clyde Rd	1935
10581	Clarence St/. Peveral St	1935
10667	Clarence St	1935
10776	Rata St	1936
10988	Kahu Rd	1937
11446	Riccarton Rd	1938
11261	Rimu St/ Rata St	1938
11457	Ratray St	1938
11923	Wharenuui Rd	1939
11617	Ratray St	1939
14999	Wharenuui Rd	1939
15001	Piko Cresc	1939
15002	Centennial Ave	1939
15008	Centennial Ave	1939

15009	Centennial Ave	1939
15015	Tonga St	1939
15016	Elizabeth St/ Centennial Ave	1939
15023	North of Blenheim Rd	1939
15040	Centennial Ave	1940
11845	Riccarton Rd	1940
11791	Kahu Rd	1940
11977	Kahu Rd	1940
11887	Clyde Rd	1940
11923	Wharenui Rd	1940
15035	Shand Crs/ Paeroa St/ Euston St	1940
12076	Puriri St	1941
12416	Riccarton Rd	1943
13522	Ngahere St	1946
13140	Hinau St	1946
13668	Kahu Rd	1947
14225	Riccarton Rd	1948
14154	Puriri St	1948
13822	Totara St	1948
15173	Hinau St	1950
15046	Shand Crs	1950
15618	Totara St	1951
15471	Clyde Rd	1951
15726	Puriri St	1951
16509	Riccarton Rd	1952
16771	Totara St	1952
17233	Hinau St	1953
17798	Clyde Rd	1954
17729	Puriri St	1954
17810	Clyde Rd	1954

### **Cashmere**

4030	Westenra Tce	1914
1358	Dyers Pass Rd	1898
2159	Dyers Pass Rd	1905
2427	Macmillan Ave	1907
2431	Hackthorne Rd	1907
2582	Hackthorne Rd	1908
2668	Whisby Rd	1908
2675	Hackthorne Rd	1909
3211	Hackthorne Rd	1911
3220	Hackthorne Rd	1911
3765	Hackthorne Rd	1912
3958	Hackthorne Rd	1913
3860	Macmillan Ave	1913
3859	Macmillan Ave	1913
3705	Hackthorne Rd	1913
4917	Hackthorne Rd	1913
4500	Hackthorne Rd	1915

4750	Hackthorne Rd	1916
4654	Hackthorne Rd	1916
4955	Hackthorne Rd	1918
4919	Hackthorne Rd	1918
5397	Hackthorne Rd	1919
6959	Dyers Pass Rd	1922
6372	Hackthorne Rd	1922
6281	Hackthorne Rd	1922
6460	Macmillan Ave	1922
6384	Hackthorne Rd	1922
6749	Hackthorne Rd	1923
6789	Hackthorne Rd	1923
6533	Hackthorne Rd	1923
7141	Hackthorne Rd	1924
7212	Valley Rd	1924
7775	Macmillan Ave	1926
7985	Hackthorne Rd	1926
8483	Dyers Pass Rd	1927
10644	Macmillan Ave	1935
11264	Dyers Pass Rd	1937
11290	Macmillan Ave	1938
12272	Macmillan Ave	1939
11797	Macmillan Ave	1940
12121	Hackthorne Rd	1941
12137	Gwynfa Ave	1941
12894	Hackthorne Rd	1945
13033	Hackthorne Rd	1946
14215	Hackthorne Rd	1948
14011	Gwynfa Ave	1948
15351	Hackthorne Rd	1950
15429	Dyers Pass Rd	1950
15352	Valley Rd	1950
16701	Valley Rd	1952
17232	Hackthorne Rd	1953
16896	Hackthorne Rd	1953
17229	Hackthorne Rd	1953
16974	Hackthorne Rd	1953
17661	Hackthorne Rd	1954

#### Certificates of Title

178/24	1 Wood Lane
138/127	3 Wood Lane

#### 1.3.4 Soil and Health Association of New Zealand Head Office

Papers relating to establishment of the Soil & Health Association of New Zealand



### 1.3.5 Sumner Museum

‘The Spur, Sumner’. Sales Brochure, 1914

### 1.3.6 University of Canterbury, Department of Geography, Map Library

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| 98-285 | Soil Map of Christchurch City, 1997 (Landcare Research, Lincoln)                                   |
| 98-286 | Potential Horticultural Versatility of Soils, Christchurch City, 1997 (Landcare Research, Lincoln) |
| 98-287 | Suitability of Soils for Urban Use, Christchurch City, 1997 (Landcare Research, Lincoln)           |

‘Growth of Christchurch’ (Christchurch City Council)

### 1.4 Official Publications

Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives

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Statistics

*Statistics of New Zealand for 1864, Including a Census of the Colony, Taken in December of that Year, Part 1, No.24*

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*Bulletin of the New Zealand Womens’ Welfare League*

*The Christchurch Guardian and Canterbury Advertiser*

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*The Christchurch Star-Sun*

*The City Beautiful*

*Compost Magazine* 1-14 (1942-1955)

*Farm & Garden Digest* (1950)

*Forest & Bird*

*The House Beautiful* (1922-1923)

*House and Garden* 80-84 (1940-1943)

*The Gardeners' Chronicle* (1920)

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## Appendix 1.i

***Press Advertisement 1 August 2005***

### **GARDENING RECOLLECTIONS SOUGHT**

Matt Morris, a Ph.D. student in the School of History, University of Canterbury, is seeking recollections about Christchurch's home gardens up to 1954 for his thesis.

He is specifically looking for recollections from people who lived and gardened in Merivale/Fendalton, the Avon Loop area, Riccarton, North Linwood, Cashmere and Clifton, or who were well-acquainted with those areas.

Matt wants to know what was grown in these gardens, who did the gardening, and what were the gardens' main functions. Recollections about other aspects of these gardens, such as where plants came from and how soil fertility was maintained, would be equally gratefully received.

Recollections may be sent to Matt at: [mpm32@student.canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:mpm32@student.canterbury.ac.nz) or to Matt Morris, School of History, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch.

Matt would also like to tape record interviews with people who have substantial gardening recollections in those areas of Christchurch mentioned, again up to 1954.

For more information, please contact Matt at the above addresses, or by telephone on ph. 366 7001 extn. 8297 during normal working hours, or on the weekend on ph. 328 8266.

## Appendix 1.ii

### ***Press Advertisement, 16 January 2006***

Matt Morris, a Ph.D student in History at the University of Canterbury, would like to speak to people who had or knew of home gardens in Clifton and Cashmere up to 1954. He is also looking for photographs of such gardens.

Any enquiries can be made to Matt Morris ph. 366 7001 x8297 during working hours.

Written recollections can be sent to Matt Morris, School of History, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch. They can also be emailed to [mpm32@student.canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:mpm32@student.canterbury.ac.nz).

## Appendix 2.i

### Letter to Interviewees

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my PhD project on the history of Christchurch's home gardens, which I am working on through the School of History at the University of Canterbury.

The thesis is in three parts, working through gardening organisation literature, through property advertisements and with oral histories. The period I am covering is 1850-1954. The third part, where I am collecting and working with oral histories, examines six small areas of Christchurch. These are Clifton, Cashmere, North Linwood, the Avon Loop, Riccarton and Fendalton.

I am hoping that through discussion with people who lived in these areas in the period I am covering, or who knew others who did, that I will be able to add a good deal of depth and perhaps some varying perspectives on gardening from the other sources I am looking at. Indeed, the oral histories are crucial to the thesis, so I am very grateful that you are willing to participate.

Essentially, I am interested in knowing what your main recollections of your garden and the gardens around you are. What were the important plants and structures, why were they important, what was the relationship between them and the landscape, etc? I am proposing an open-ended interview in which you tell me what you think is significant, as I want to avoid asking leading questions.

I am enclosing a prompt sheet, however, as a guide, but you will no doubt think of other things to discuss.

I am also hoping that you might also have photographs or papers relating to your garden or the gardens in your area that might shed further light on what was going on.



If this were the case, and you were willing to have these included in the project, that would be wonderful. However, I am not expecting you to produce these!

As I have indicated, I would like to tape record our conversation so that it is properly captured in your own words. My process is to then transcribe the interview and send it to you for you to check for accuracy and to make any amendments or deletions as you may see fit.

I am also enclosing the standard University of Canterbury consent form for such interviews. This requires your signature before we can proceed. I am happy to answer any questions you may have before you do so. If you wish to withdraw from the project at any point you may of course do so.

The Human Ethics Committee has approved this project, which is being supervised by Professor John Cookson and Associate Professor Philippa Mein Smith.

If you would like to contact me regarding any of this, please feel free to do so.

My home phone number is 382 6334. I am usually home in the evenings. I can also be contacted at the University on 366 7001, extension 8297. My email address is [mpm32@student.canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:mpm32@student.canterbury.ac.nz). My postal address School of History, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch.

I will contact you prior to our proposed meeting to check whether you have any questions or concerns, and to confirm.

Thank you once again, and all the best.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Morris

School of History,

University of Canterbury

## **Appendix 2.ii**

### **Prompt Sheet for Interviewees**

Matt Morris  
School of History  
University of Canterbury  
Private Bag 4800  
Christchurch

#### **Interview Prompt Sheet for Matt Morris' PhD**

**(For an open-ended interview.**

**Other topics and themes may be raised by the participant)**

How important was your garden to you, and why?

What was growing in it?

Who worked in it?

Was soil fertility important?

Where did the plants come from?

What do you remember about the other gardens in your neighbourhood?

Was irrigation ever an issue?

Was your garden a source of pride?

Did people come to visit it?

What kinds of plants were most important in your garden (vegetables, native plants, flowers, fruit etc...)?

Do you garden? How did you learn about gardening? What were the most important sources of information?

Did your neighbours care about their gardens?

Did your garden, and those around you, change much over time?

# Appendix 3.i

## Press Property Advertisements, January 1865

Date	Area	Address	Acreage	house style	water	garden/ land description	fruit	other trees	lawn/grass	flowers	shrubs	vegetables	structures
1 21-1865		Papanui Rd. nr Sawyers Arms	3a	4roomed hs, weatherboard		1/2 acre, well fenced and planted			1.5a English grass				
2		Rural Sect. 143 Fendall Town Rd	6.25a	land	capital riv or frontage								
3	Ilam	Ilam, Between Papanui and Riccarton Rds	several a sects	land	fronting Avon	allowed to be among most beautiful villa sites	-		-	-	-	-	
4		frontage Colombo St sth	6 allotments	land									
5		adjoining above	one 1/4a	land									
6	Fend	Fendalltown estate, close to Hagley Park	from 1-5 a	land	several have valuable riv or frontages								
7	Stammore	immediately adjoining east of Cashel St	33 building allotments	dwelling hs on one	-								
8		Lot 160 of Town Reserves, front on Madras St	45 ails, at least 1/2 chain frontage	land	properly bounded by stream access to all allotments	land first rate, lying high, unusual facilities for drainage							
9		close to Hagley Park	1.5a	land									
10		Horford St, Colombo	20 ft frontage	ground									
11		Stammore Rd	1.25a	7rm house, detached kitchen	-	half of property in garden	fruit	forest trees	1/2 in paddock				
12	withn 1.5m Hagley Park	portion of Milford property: nth side of Fendalltown (or Hagley) rd	30a to be sold in 1,2 or 3 lots	old bc country residence, or subdivided	ample rd and river frontages								
13		opposite railway terminus, Colombo st	108ft front	4rm hs	water pump	now used as garden, with live fence							
14		Cashel st		shops- house									
15 4-1-1865		Antigua St south		5rm house	plenty spring water								
16 6-1-1865		fronting Ferry Rd, almost adj. east town belt	5.5a (old bc extended to 8a)	8rm dhs, stable, snug cottage		soil of richest kind, part in garden			part in grassland				
17 7-1-1865	Town belt east	Auburn Lodge, on Avon	3a	12 rms	on Avon	well stocked and planted	fruit		with or withn paddock	flowers			greenhouse, outhouses
18		Barbadoes St near railway station		5rm cottage									
19 11-1-1865	St Martins		2-7a	sites for villas	on heathcote								
20	Town Belt Nth	close to Papanui Rd	10 lots 1/4a each	2 with cottages									
21		Horford st near fisher's store	30ft front	plot of land									
22	chch		1/2a	7rm house		v tastefully laid out	variety fruit trees		lawn for croquet				
23		fronting Windmill Rd	3/4a	house									
24		St Asaph St, near Prince of Wales		4 rm house									
25 13-1-1865		Ferry Rd	sections to suit	land	artesian well, stream available for every section								
26 18-1-1865	Sumner		1/4a	land									
27	Aslan	fronting Town Belt and Papanui Rd, A.C. Barker's property	1/4a scds	land									
28		Durham St		land									
29		Between Lichfield and Cashel Sts		land									
30		Montrose St	1/2a	substantial house		garden in excellent order		fully stock w trees			fully stocked w shrubs		
31		colombo st sth, near railway station		land									
32		Stn Town belt, close to Gt Sthn & Nth Railway St.		land									
33		Horford St, in Town Reserve, Lot 133		land									
34	East Town Belt	between Horford + Cashel Sts		land									
35	St Albans	close to Wesleyan school, St Albans Rd		land									
36		Windmill Rd, close to Hislop's garden		land									
37	town	Cashel St	1/4a	dwelling hs + offices		garden							
38	chch	Town Reserve No.260 + 262, Durham + Chester		land									
39		Kilmore St, close to Oxford Tce E		land									
40		town belt nth, close to Papanui Rd	10 lots of 1/4a	land									
41		Manchester, Horford, Worcester sts + Luffner Sq		land									
42		horford st	7 sects 1/4a	4rm, 2rm house									
43		papanui rd, nr Kilmore		land									
44		Railway station at Opawa	1 plot, of 4 3/4a, several sites for villas	land									
45	1/4m lrm chch	in neighbourhood of Wilson's bridge	40 lots 1a+	land									
46		Stammore Rd, Cashel St East	50 plots, 1/2-1a ea	land									
47		Ferry Rd	46a in lots of 1-3a	land									
48		colombo st sth	5a	land				planted w trees					
49	Riccarton	part of Rural Section 160, fronts on Riccarton + Harewood rds	180a for villa subd	land	well of capital water				35a in Engl grass				
50	St Albans	Springfield Rd	1/8a	4rm cottage									
51		Armagh St by Govt buildings		house and shop									
52 26-1-1865		blwn Melville House + Wesleyan Church, few hundred yards from govt bldgs.	1/4a	7rm cottage									
53 31-1-1865		Cashel St, 2 door from Provincial Hotel		3rm house		garden attached							

## Appendix 3.ii

### *Press Property Advertisements, January 1875*

[illegible]



### Appendix 3.iii

## Press Property Advertisements, January 1885

Date	Location	Address	Acreage	house style	water	garden/ land description	fruit	other trees	lawn/grass	flowers	shrubs	vegetables	structures
1 6-1-1885	addington		good sect of land	4m house									
2	addington		good sect of land	4m house	artesian well								
3	Fendalltown	Fendalltown rd	75+ a	14m commodious family residence									
4		5 mins walk from Papanu rd	5.5a	family house	good water supply	gardens				paddocks			
5	New Brighton	4mins walk of New Brighton Hotel	various	land	artesian water	gardens	orchard			tennis lawns			
6 7-1-1885	Merivale			8m house		high and dry, land of a rich loam, of superior quality, perfectly free from sand							
7		close to town, adjoins railway and Beath on Riccarton Rd	3.5a	7m house				splendid orchard in full bearing					coach house
8		near Christs College		house						tennis court			coach house
9	Central	Gloucester St West and Montreal	6 props, 264ft x 165ft	6 houses									
10 8-1-1885	Opawa	3mins walk of Opawa railway station	.5a	7m house									
11 12-1-1885	St Albans	Brighton villa	1/4a	villa		splendid garden							
12	addington	Poulsen St, Lincoln Rd, within 3mins of tram, railway	1/2a	2 substl houses			filled with fruit			choicest flowers			
13		Cashed St East		large, 7m hs									
14		North Belt	1/8a	6m house		nice garden							
15		Hereford St east	3/8a	7m villa		beautiful garden		old trees					conservatory
16		Kilmore st, close to Victoria St	3/4a	hs + 6 cottages									
17	Opawa	Springbank	11a	house		magnificent grounds							
18		Barbour St		5m house		choice garden							
19	Richmond		2a	land?			orchard						
20 14-1-1885		Lancaster Park, close to tram, rail		land, suitable for villas, terraces									
21		Ferry Rd	2a3roods 16perches	land									
22		Ferry Rd, Victoria St, Elizabeth St	1a3perches	land	capital artesian flow		choice fruit trees				shrubs, &c		
23 15-1-1885		head of Park Tce	3/4a	8m house									stables
24 16-1-1885	New Brighton	adjoining Enoch Barker, close to school, Richmond Villa	20a	8m hs, and cottage	clear fresh water creek, two c	soil specially rich. Garden. Full of pleasant romantic walks	orchard	trees, high holly fence, fine timber					greenhouse, lowhouse
25 17-1-1885	Fendalltown		1.5a	9m house			fruit			lawn, Paddock		vegetable garden	stables
26		Ferry Rd + Matheson's Rd	49links Ferry, 151links Math	4m house									lowhouse
27		Ferry Rd		house									
28		Papanu Rd, part of Abbots Exeter nursery	64links x 395links	land		high and dry, healthy	beautiful orchard						
29		Papanu Rd, part of Abbots Exeter nursery	64links x 395links	land		high and dry, healthy							
30		Papanu Rd, part of Abbots Exeter nursery	64links x 395links	land		high and dry, healthy	libert trees in full bearing						
31		Papanu Rd, part of Abbots Exeter nursery	64links x 395links	land		high and dry, healthy							
32		Antigua St	1/2a	cottage									
33 19-1-1885	St Albans		26 5perches	5m house		nice garden							
34 21-1-1885		Chester St west, nearly opp Wesleyan chapel	1/2a	6m house									
35	Opawa	adjoining hon w. Reeves	5a3/23p	land									
36	Sockburn	near Sockburn Railway Station		6m cottage									
37	Summer	Colenso St	1/4a	nice cottage									
38	Summer	Christchurch rd to Summer											
39 24-1-1885			50a+	8m house		close to sea, fine healthy							
40		Millen St, close to Colombo rd	1/4a	2 hs, 4m, 5m	artesian well	splendid land, garden	orchard	avenue	paddocks				
41 27-1-1885		Papanu Rd, Camden Villa		6m villa									
42		Andover St	3/4a	8m well built house		garden							conservatory, stabling
43 28-1-1885		Selwyn st sh	10 3/4a	land									
44 31-1-1885	Opawa		6a	6m house									
45		29, 31 Armagh St east	21 perches ea	2x 7ms									

## Appendix 3.iv

### Press Property Advertisements, January 1895

	Date	Location	Address	Acreage	house style	water	garden/ land description	fruit	other trees	lawn/grass	flowers	shrubs	vegetables	structures
1	1-1-1895		Hereford St		9rms									
2			Hereford St		8rms									
3			South belt		7rms									stabling
4		Lower Riccarton			6rms									
5			Armagh St East		6rms									
6			35 Worcester St East	1/4a	5rms									
7			Walker St		5rms									
8		East belt			5rms cottage									
9		New Brighton nth		53 lots, 1chainx2chians	land									
10	2-1-1895		218, 220 Gloucester st		7 and 10 rms	hot and cold water								
11		Sumner		10 sects x 1/4a+	land									
12		Sumner	facing Nayland st	1a	land									
13		Sumner			4 hs, 4-7rms									
14		Sumner		3.5a	7rms									stabling
15		Papanui		1/2a	7rms									stabling
16			Mekrose St		10rms									
17		Linwood	Parish St	1rood 24perches	modern hs, 7rms		land nicely laid out							
18			Fife St		5rms									
19		City		1/4a	7rms		garden			lawn				summer house
20		Papanui		4a	8rms		garden	orchard		paddock				stabling
21		Highfield, North belt	North and East belts	sects 1/4-1/2a ea	land	well-drained	beautiful garden land, high and dry, healthy							
22	5-1-1895	Upper Riccarton	Mallock Bank	10a	comfortable hs		ornamental grounds	orchard		paddock			kitchen garden	stables
23		Watsonville	Sumner Rd,	3a	4rm hs		in cultivation							
24		North Town Belt	Fitzgerald St	1rood, 2perches	5rms hs		garden							vinery, fowlhs
25		Sydenham		3roods, 2perches	land									
26	10-1-1895	North Belt			7rm villa						flower garden		vegetable garden	conservatory
27		Belfast		1/4a	4rm house		good garden	fruit trees						stable
28		New Brighton	on Esplanade	1rood10perches	5rm house									
29		Upper Riccarton		3a	5rm house		garden	fruit trees						stabling
30		Bryndwr, Fendalton		3.5a	6rm hs									
31	12-1-1895	Watsonville	Sumner Rd,	1/4a	land	water splendid and abundant								
32		Watsonville	Sumner Rd,	1/2a	land	water splendid and abundant								
33		Watsonville	Sumner Rd,	1/4a	land	water splendid and abundant			macrocarpa					
34		Watsonville	Sumner Rd,	3 sects 1/4a ea	land	water splendid and abundant								
35		Watsonville	Sumner Rd,	1a	land	water splendid and abundant								
36		Watsonville	Sumner Rd,	2-3a	8rms	water splendid and abundant	grounds well laid out and planted							
37		Watsonville	Sumner Rd,	3a	4rm	water splendid and abundant	capital land	good strawberry gardens						stabling
38		Watsonville	Sumner Rd,	3.5a	8rms	water splendid and abundant	highly productive gardens	good orchard						stabling
39		Watsonville	Sumner Rd,	3a+	land	water splendid and abundant		early fruits					vegetables	
40		St Albans	Barbadoes St, just over Nth belt	1/4a	4rms cottage		good garden	fruit trees						
41	16-1-1895	Papanui	St Johns St	1rood, 24perches	7rm house		laid out in garden			lawns, etc				fowl run
42	18-1-1895	Linwood	Worcester St	3/8a + 1/4a adjoining	modern, 8rms		garden, well stocked	fruit trees		lawn				
43	19-1-1895	Sydenham		1/4a	5rms hs			fruit trees						
44		City		33ftx115ft	4rm hs			grape vines						
45			close to Papanui Rd		4rm hs		large section							





## Appendix 3.v

## Press Property Advertisements, January 1905

[illegible]



91		North belt		1/2a	7m		lovely garden							
92		Sumner		1/4a	5m	h&c								
93		Sumner	Head St		7m									
94			Riccarton Rd	3/4a	8m	h&c								
95				1a	9m	h&c	garden	orchard		lawns	flowerbeds	kitchen garden	fowls, vinery	
96		Linwood		27 perches	4m									
97			Gresford estate	1/4a	5m villa	h&c	nicely laid out and well stocked							
98		Central			7ms									
99			30 Gloucester St	40lx165ft	7m	h&c	high sect							
100			adjoining above	1/4a	6m	h&c								
101			Edgeware Rd	1rood 22 perches	5m mod	h&c	garden well laid out							
102		Linwood		30perches	5m	h&c	high and dry							
103		Fendallton		2.25a	8m	h&c	garden	orchard						
104		Beckenham		1/4a	5m	water in garden	nicely laid out in garden							
105		Sydenham			4m									
106			Wilsons Rd		6m	h&c								
107		Redcliffs	facing estuary		land									
108		Linwood			7m									
109			Colombo st sth	1/4a	5m mod	h&c								
110	3/01/1905	Merivale	Rugby St	1/4a	7m									
111		North belt		3/8a	9m	h&c	tastefully laid out in lawns	good orchard		lawns	shrubs		stable	
112		Addington		1/4a	7m	h&c								
113		St Albans	Madras St	1/4a	6ms		grand section						stables	
114		Beckenham		1/2a	7ms		well laid out in garden			tennis court and lawns				
115		St Albans	just off Papanui Rd,	1/4A	5m									
116		city west			8m									
117		Linwood	Cashel St	1/8a	6m	h&c								
118	4/01/1905	St Albans		3/4a	4m cottage									
119		Port Hills		1a	6m hs		tastefully laid out in garden			lawn				
120			Lincoln Rd		7m									
121		Linwood		1/4a	6m	h&c								
122			St Asaph St											
123				1/4a	4m									
124		city west			5m									
125			just off Ferry Rd											
126		Avonside		4.5a	5m	h&c	good shelter						stables	
127		Opawa		1a	9m		well laid out							
128		Linwood		1/4a	9m	deep well	well laid out and planted							
129				1/8a	5m									
130		Spreydon		3a	5m		garden	orchard					stable	
131		Linwood			4m		nicely laid out							
132		Waltham	handy to coach and tram		6m									
133			Bealey Ave	30 perches	6m	deep well	well fenced, laid out							
134		Cashmere Hills		1a	5m mod									
135				1/4a	4m									
136			just over North Belt	1/8a	5m	h&c								
137		Sydenham		1/8a	3m									
138		Linwood		1/4a	4m									
139			St Asaph St	1/2a	8m								glasshouse	
140		Beckenham		1/4a	5m	H & c								
141		Tankerville	cls to Lincoln rd	3.5a	7m	h&c	garden	orchard						
142			Peterborough St		7m									
143	5/01/1905		Springfield Rd	2a	6m	h&c								
144			Bealey Ave	1/2a	8m villa	h&c							stables	
145		Sumner		1/4a	5m villa									
146		St Albans		1/4a	6m villa	h&c								
147	6/01/1905	Richmond	off Stanmore Rd	1/4a	4m									
148		Papanui		1a	5m									
149		Sydenham	Windmill Rd	1/8a	4m cottage									
150		St Albans		1/4a	6m	h&c	well fenced							

151		Woolston	Princes St	2a	5m									
152		St Albans	NW	1/4a	6m villa		nicely laid out	fruit trees						
153		Sydenham			5m									
154		Linwood		1/4a	4m									
155		City		3/8a	6m	h&c								
156		New Brighton		1/8a	5m									
157		North belt		30 perches	6m	h&c								
158		City		40ft front	7m									stables
159		Papanui		1/2a	8m		well laid out and planted			tennis lawn				
160		Sydenham		1/8a	4m			good orchard						
161		NE		1a+	6m		well fenced, laid out and planted							
162		Sydenham	Falsgrave St	1/4a	5m		nicely laid out in garden	orchard						
163		Richmond		1/4a	4m		high							
164	x	Linwood		1/4a	6m	h&c								
165	7/01/1905	City	Close to Park Tce		8m	h&c	well fenced and laid out							
166		Papanui	close to Blighs Rd	1/4a	7m									
167			Durham St north, nr Bealey Ave	1/4a	7m	splendid water sup	well fenced and planted, garden	fruit trees		lawn				
168			Bristol St	1/4a	8m		tastefully laid out	orchard		lawn		flowers		
169		Merivale		1/2a	10m		beautifully laid out							
170		Merivale	Papanui Rd	1/2a	7m									
171			Bealey Ave	3/8a	9m	hot and cold		fruit trees		lawn		flowers		stables
172			Webb St	1/4a	8m	deep well								
173		Linwood	Haast St	1/2a	6m cottage									stable
174			just off West Belt	1/4a	5m			fruit trees		lawn		flowers		
175		St Albans			6m									
176		Linwood			7m									
177		Sydenham			5m									
178			Suburban	1.5a	modern hs							tomato growing		glasshouses
179		North West		1/2a	10m									
180		Merivale		3/4a	8m									
181			Suburban	3/4a	8m			orchard						
182			Shakespeare RD	30 perches	5m		garden							
183			Park Ice		8m									
184			Suburban	1/4a	4m									
185		Avonside, Dallington		1/4a	5m	h&c								
186	9/01/1905	Lower Riccarton			5m									
187	10/01/1905		Hereford st		4m		garden							
188			nr railway station		4m									
189		Linwood		1/2a	8m	h&c	nice grounds	orchard						
190		[685 on 11-1]	within city	1/2a	7m	h&c	planted							
191		city		1/4a	6m	h&c	one of the most prolific gardens in the city			lawns		flowerbeds		
192			near cartlon		5m	h&								
193		Linwood		1/4a	6m									
194			Junction St	25 perches	5m		well kept garden	fruit trees						
195	11/01/1905		Bealey Ave	1/4a	6m		very nicely laid out							
196		Linwood			5m		nicely laid out							
197		city	close to park and gardens	1/4a	6m			fruit trees						
198	12/01/1905		Cashel St	1/4a 13 perches	6m	h&c	well fenced and planted							
199			Papanui Rd	4a	10m		ornamental grounds	orchard						
200		North belt			8m		nicely laid out							

201			Madras St	1/4a	7m												
202		Linwood	Hanmer St	1/8a	6m												
203			Lincoln Rd, Hagley Park	1/4a	8m												
204		Richmond	North Avon Rd	3/4a	8m												
205	13/01/1905		cise to lown	2 5a	8m	good water supply			fruit garden			lawns					
206	14/01/1905		front to Carlton, back to St James' Toe	100 links front	6m	h&c		pretty garden				lawn					
207			Waimari Rd, off Riccarton	5a 20 3/4perches	4rm cottage												stables
208		Sydenham	Southey St	1/2a	5rm cottage						profitable fruit trees, and a lot of raspberry bushes, etc						
209	16/01/1905		near Mansfield Ave	1/2a	6rm	h&c		attractively laid out									
210		[550 on 30/1]	off Papanui Rd	3/8a	6rm							lawn	flowerbeds				stable
211			nr Christchurch railway station		4rm cottage	water inside											
212	18/01/1905		Hereford st		7m	h&c											
213		city	41 Horatio St	8 perches	8m												
214		city	47 Allan St	12 perches	4rm cottage	rms connection											
215		city	8 Allan St	8 perches	6m	rms connection											
216		city	6 Allan St	10 perches	7m	rms connection											
217		city	17 Fife St	13.5 perches	5m	rms connection											
218		city		13.5 perches	3rm cottage	rms connection											
219	19/01/1905	city	Cashel St	1/4a	10m												
220		Merivale	just off Papanui Rd	1a 17perches	11rms												
221			Montreal St		10m												
222		city	Kilmore st	1/4a	9m												
223		St Albans	cls to bealey ave	1/4a	8m												
224		city	Hereford st	1/4a	13m	h&c											
225		city	near Latimer Squ		16m												
226		city	Durham st	30 perches	7m												
227			Eversleigh St		6m												
228	20/01/1905	Linwood	Barbour St	1/4a	5m T hs	h&c											
229		St Albans		1/4a	6m	h&c											
230				1/4a	5m	h&c											
231		Addington		3/8a	6m		garden		splendid orchard								
232		Heathcote Valley			5m												
233		East Belt		22 perches	6m	deep well											
234	21/01/1905	Papanui		2 5a	5m												
235		Merivale		1/2a	7m	h&c		nicey laid out									
236		city		1/4a	9m	h&c											
237			adjoining Lancaster Park	1/4a	9m	h&c		tastefully planted									
238			Derby St	1/4a	6m			nicey laid out									
239		Linwood		1/4a	4m												
240		Richmond		1a 17perches	4m					orchard 80 fruit trees							
241			Ensors Rd	1/4a	5m					fruit garden							
242			North Chch	1 chain front	5m					fruit trees							
243		Linwood	Ferry Rd	1/4a	6m												
244		Papanui		5a	6m		garden		orchard								
245			Bealey Ave	1/4a	6m		neat garden and grounds										
246			Gloucester St	1/4a	9m	h&c											
247		Addington	Burke St		6m	h&c											
248			Shakespeare RD		7RM												
249	23/01/1905	Lower Riccarton		1/2a	7m		well laid out										greenhouse
250			Armagh St	50 perches	7m												

251		Papanui		1a	8m		well laid out in garden	orchard		lawn					stable
252			Worcester St	1/4A	8m	h&c	beautifully laid out								
253		Addington		3/16a	5m										
254			Papanui Rd	2.5a	8m	h&c	garden								
255			Hereford st		8m	h&c									
256	25/01/1905	city		1/4a	4m sq hs		well planted	choice fruits			flowers	shrubs			
257		Sumner	esplanade		7m										
258			Roseberry St		4m										
259		Linwood	170 Cashel St	141x252 links	5m	water laid on	tastefully laid out grounds	orchard							
260	26/01/1905	Linwood	just over east belt		4m										
261		Sydenham			4m										
262		Addington		1/4a	7m										
263		Spreydon	Somerfield St	1 rood	5m										
264	27/01/1905	Fendallton		3.5a	5m			fruit garden		lawn	flowerbeds in perfect order				stables
265		Linwood	Haast St	1 rood 8 perches	7m		garden	large orchard							
266		Linwood	Gloucester St	1/4a	5m	h&c									
267	28/01/1905	Linwood			6m										
268		Addington		1/4a	5m										
269		St Albans			5m										
270		Sydenham			5m										
271		city			5m										
272			just off Colombo st tramline	1/4a	5m	h&c		fruit trees		lawn	flower garden				
273			Bealey Ave	50x132 ft deep	9m	deep well									
274		christchurch west	Gloucester St	34.5x115 ft	7m	h&c	nice garden								
275		Sydenham		1/4a	9m										
276		Sydenham		1/4a	5m villa										
277		North belt		1/4a	5m villa										
278			Selwyn St	54 perches	6m										
279		New Brighton		1/4a	8m										
280		Papanui	Vagues rd	1a 7perches	5m T hs			fruit trees						potatoes	stables
281	30/01/1905		just off Colombo st		5m										
282			Huxley St	1/4a	5m										
283			off Shakespeare Rd	1/4a	cottage										
284		city		1/2a	7m mod		planted								

## Appendix 3.vi

### *Press Property Advertisements, January 1915*

[illegible]



[illegible]



151		Avonside			1/4a	5m bungalow	h&c												
152		Papanui			5.5a	2m cottage		rich land											
153		St Albans			1/4a	4m bungalow	h&c												
154		Riccarton			1/4a	4m bungalow	h&c	first class garden											
155		St Albans	cls to Bealey Ave		1/8a	5m bungalow	h&c												
156	16/01/1915	North Richmond			1/2a	6m	stream frontage		fine orchard, plenty small fruit					wel stocked flower garden					
157		Waltham				5m bungalow		good garden soil	fruit trees										
158		Sumner	Dryden St			2m whare													
159		Sumner				4m hs		soil is of the best											
160		Spreydon				4m hs			fruit, grapes									glasshouse	
161		Mervale			3/8a	8m res		tastefully laid out in pleasure garden	orchard										
162		St Albans	12 Berry St		1/8a	5m													
163		Bunwood	cnr New Brighton rd & Queensbury		1a 17 perches	7m													
164		St Albans			24 perches	5m bungalow		borders	orchard					flower garden				stabling	
165		Mervale	89 Winchester St		1 rood 17 perches	6m	artesian well	nicey laid out and planted											
166	18/01/1915	Mervale			1/4a	6m		garden				lawn	good variety of bulbs	flowering shrubs					
167	19/01/1915	St Albans	cls to Papanui Rd			5m bungalow													
168		Linwood			1/4a	6m res	h&c												
169			Victoria Tce		1/2a	small hs	water supply	laid out in garden											
170	21/01/1915	St Albans			1/8a	5m bungalow	hp water												
171		New Brighton				5m													
172		Linwood			1/8a	4m hs	splendid private water supply												
173		Spreydon			26 perches	5m hs	h&c												
174		Linwood				5m	h&c	front and back garden											
175		Papanui	Harewood Rd		4.5a	5m hs		good garden	orchard										
176		Papanui			3a	4m hs											potatoes		
177	23/01/1915	Sydenham			1/8a	5m hs			fruit trees										
178		Spreydon			3/16a	5m bungalow													
179		Sydenham				5m hs												stable	
180		Addington				5m bungalow													
181		Fendallton			1/2a	6m bungalow			young orchard										
182		city	north			3m cottage													
183		Sydenham	Milton St		1/4a	2m cottage												stable	
184		Linwood			1/4a	5m hs		garden				lawn							
185		Spreydon	Barrington St		1a	small cottage		garden				lawn		nice shrubs			stable		
186		Linwood	572 Gloucester St		1/2a	8m hs		garden	orchard										
187		Linwood	458 and 462 Tuam St		2 roods 12 perches	6m and 4m												motor shed	femery
188	25/01/1915	Fendallton			3/8a	7m													
189		Fendallton			2a	7m		nice garden	good orchard									stable	
190		fendallton			6a	7m res	artesian well	grounds well kept	orchard								potatoes		
191	26/01/1915	Addington	just off Lincoln Rd		1a	7m hs	taps laid on all over garden	well laid out	fruit garden	ornamental trees								stable	
192		New Brighton				4m													
193		fendallton				6m bungalow		slendid soil											
194	27/01/1915		49 Ashbourne (off Ferry)		1/4a	6m hs		nice garden											
195		Papanui			2 roods 12 perches	8m res		well planted	fruit trees	ornamental trees								stabling	
196		Mervale			1/4a	6m 1 hs		garden				lawn							
197	28/01/1915	St Albans			1 chain front	hs		nicey laid out in garden											
198		St Albans			3/4a	7m hs													
199		St Albans				5m bungalow													
200	29/01/1915	Spreydon	Lyttelton & Cobham Sts		3/16a	6m hs													
201		St Albans	just over Bealey Ave			5m hs													
202			5 mins from square			6m res													
203		St Albans			1/4a		hp water												
204	30/01/1915	Fendallton			1/4a	5m bungalow	good water supply												
205			close to car		1/8a	4m bungalow		established garden	fruit trees										
206						.													

## Appendix 3.vii

### *Press Property Advertisements, January 1925*

Date	Location	Address	Acreage	house style	water	garden/ land description	fruit	other trees	lawn/grass	flowers	shrubs	vegetables	structures	rock gardens	fernery
1	2/01/1925	Cashmere	Hackthorn Rd	1/4a	8m bungalow					beautiful lawns					
2		Fendalton		1/3005perches	5m bungalow										
3		Clifton	1 The Spur	1/4a	6m bungalow		perfectly laid out				choice shrubs			rock garden	
4		Fendalton		1/2a	art bungalow	stream frontage	grounds a special feature						glass house		
5			Bealey Ave	80ft front	6m bungalow										
6		Spreydon		1/4a	4m bungalow										
7		Sydenham		1/4a	6m hs		fruit trees								
8		St Albans			art bungalow										
9		St Martins			bungalow									motor garage	
10		Opawa		1a	8m		rice garden							motor shed	
11		Fisherton		25perches	5m bungalow				tennis court				garage		
12		Opawa		32perches	4m bungalow										
13		Sydenham		1/4a	4m bungalow										
14		Linwood	near Cashel st tram	3/4a	10m hs		well planted								
15		Hornby	Main Stn Rd	1/2a	4m hs		well planted								
16		City	Herford St	1/4a	9m				lawn			kitchen garden			
17			almost in city		3m bungalow										
18		City		1/8a	7m hs		well laid out and planted							fowlhouses	
19		Linwood		1/4a	7m hs		well laid out and planted								
20		Spreydon		1/4a	7m hs		well laid out and planted								
21			Park Tce		mod res								garage		
22		Fendalton		1/4a	6m bungalow		good section								
23			close to Clyde Rd	1/2a	6m bungalow		very fine section								
24		Merivale		32perches	6m bungalow		well laid out	fruit trees						motor shed	
25			Near St Andrews College	32perches	6m bungalow	h&c water	nicely laid out			flowers, select roses		vegetable garden	motor shed		
26		Fendalton		large section	5ms										
27				1/2a	9m bungalow		beautifully laid out								
28		Merivale			6m bungalow		fine section						motor garage		
29		West end	few mins from square		10m hs										
30		Merivale		3/8a	7m hs		gardens		fine lawn					glasshouse, motor garage	
31		Merivale		1/2a	8m hs		the garden is a picture	ornamental trees				vegetable garden	fowlhouse, motor garage		
32		Linwood	Rugby St	1/4a	5m hs	h&c water	garden		lawns						
33		Riccarton		1/4a	4m hs		splendid section								
34		Bryn-dur		1/2a	4m hs	h&c water	garden		lawns						
35		Walham		1/4a	5m l house		good garden								
36		Fendalton		1/4a	6m art bung	h service	well kept garden		lawns				motor garage		
37		Riccarton		1/4a	5m bungalow	h service	pretty garden								
38		Papanui		2a	8m bungalow		garden		lawns, paddock						
39		Merivale	Rugby St	1/2a	large res		grounds well laid out	trees		choicest flowers	shrubs				
40		Fendalton		1/4a	6m art bung		high and dry						motor garage		
41		City		1/8s	4m collage										
42		Sydenham		9perches	5m l house										
43		City		1/8a	6m bungalow										
44		Avonside		1/4a	5m bungalow										
45		Opawa		1/4a	6m bungalow										

46		St Albans	cls to Bealey Ave	1/4a	7m hs												
47		Riccarton Spreydon		1a	6m hs		good garden										
48		St Albans		1/4a	5m hs		garden				lawn						
49	3/01/1925	St Albans	Bishop St	23perches	5m semi-bung												
50			Manchester St	3/16a	6m hs											motor garage	
51			close to city		5m												
52			close to Hagley Park		5m	h&c water											
53		St Albans			bungalow												
54		Cashmere		30perches	5m bungalow	h&c water											
55		Cashmere Hills		1/4a	6m bungalow												
56		Beckenham		25perches	4m bungalow												
57		Spreydon		32perches	5m bungalow												
58		St Albans			5ms	h&c water	elevated position				lawn					glasshouse, motor shed	
59		Woolston			4m bungalow												
60		Spreydon			5m bungalow												
61		Merivale		3/16a	6m bungalow		tastefully laid out									motor garage	
62		Merivale	Rossall St	1/4a	8m bungalow	double hot water	nicely laid out										
63		City			7m bungalow												
64		Cashmere		1/4a	6m bungalow		charming garden										
65		City	just over the avenue	1/2a	9m hs		splendid garden										
66		Fendalton		1/4a	6m bungalow												
67			off Papanui Rd		6m bungalow		nice garden										
68		Fendalton-cum-Riccarton		1/4a	7m bungalow		tastefully laid out in gardens				lawns						
69		Linwood	409 Tuam St	34perches	6m res	h.p water, artesian	laid out in garden				lawn						
70			Near St Andrews College	1/4a	6m bungalow	h.p water	laid out in garden				lawn						
71			near Bealey Ave, St Mary's	1/4a	6m bungalow		garden				lawns					motor shed	rock garden
72		Merivale	just off papanui Rd	1/4a	5m res	h.p water	garden is a perfect picture and beautiful fruit trees				roses	choice shrubs	vegetable garden full of vegetables				
73		Avonside	188 River Rd, cnr Cowlishaw st	1rood24perches	6m res	h&c water											
74		New Brighton	255 Esplanade	1/8a	5m bungalow	h&c water											
75		Opawa	27 Opawa Rd	1rood37perches	4m bungalow		laid out in garden				lawn						
76		Fendalton	30 Wairarapa Tce	2roods13perches	9m res		charmingly laid out and planted		ornamental trees			choice shrubs					
77	5/01/1925	btwn Ricc and Fend		1/4a+	5m bungalow	h&c water	laid out in garden				lawn					motor garage	
78		Sumner	close to beach	30perches	5m bungalow	h&c water	pretty garden										
79	7/01/1925	Opawa		1/2a	6m bungalow		most picturesque garden	splendid fruit garden	chestnut over 50ys old, var of trees		lawns		vegetable garden	motor garage, fowls		llemery	
80	8/01/1925	Avonside	[13/1/25 1040g]	1/4a	6ms	river front											
81		St Albans		large section	5m bungalow												
82		City			6m hs												
83		Papanui		large section	4m											motor garage	
84		Richmond		1/4a	6m hs		Beautiful gardens										
85		Opawa		1/2a	5m art bung		artificially laid out										
86		Sydenham			4m semi-bung		good garden										
87		Spreydon		large section	bungalow												
88		St Albans			6m collage	h.p.											
89		Fendalton			5m bungalow		good garden										
90		Addington	near Moorhouse Ave	1/4a	7m hs	h.p.	good garden									glasshouse	
91	9/01/1925	St Albans			4m bungalow												
92				6a	6m		garden				lawns					glasshouse	
93		Spreydon		30 perches	4m bungalow												
94		Fendalton		1.5a	6m bungalow	creek running through t garden					lawn					vinery	
95		Sydenham		1/8a	4m squ hs	h&c water											
96				24 perches	4m bungalow												
97		fendalton		1/4a	5m bungalow											motor garage	
98			few mins from square		8m	h&c water											
99		Papanui		1a	5m bungalow		good garden										
100	10/01/1925	North Richmond		35 perches	6m bungalow	double hot water	garden				lawns						

[illegible]

151			just off Waltham Rd	1/8a	5m bungalow														
152		Cashmere	1 Wherstead St	1/4a	5m bungalow	h&c water													
153		Merivale	32 Hewitts Rd	80 ft front	4m														
154		Richmond	14 Perth St	1/8a	5m														
155		Scarborough			5m bungalow	h&c water	pretty garden												
156		Fendalton-cum-Riccarton		1/2a	6m bungalow	electric hot water						lawn							
157	x [business]	Linwood		1/8a	2m bungalow												motor garage		
158		15/01/1925	St Albans	[17/1/25 says Papanui]															
159			Opaia		4m bungalow	h&c water													
160		Papanui			5m bungalow	h&c water													
161		Sydenham		1/8a	4m	h&c water													
162		St Albans		30 perches	5m bungalow														
163		St Albans	602 Barbadoes St		6m		garden		fruit trees			lawn							
164			cnr Ferry & Hargood's rd	4a2roods20perches	5m cottage														
165		Spreydon		4a	5m semi-bung														
166		St Albans	Westminster St	2.75a	6m semi-bung	h&c water	garden					lawn							
167		16/01/1925	64 Carlton Mill Rd		7m		garden										motor house		
168		17/01/1925	Merivale-cum-Fendalton		30 perches	6m art bung	hot water												
169			Fendalton		1/4a	5m semi-bung	h&c water	well planted				lawns							
170		Beckenham			1/8a	5m bungalow	h&c water	garden				lawn				shrubs			
171		Waltham			1/4a	6m mod hs	hp												
172		Spreydon		30 perches	4m l hs		well laid out												
173		New Brighton		1/8a	4m bungalow														
174		Spreydon		3/16a	5m bungalow	hp													
175		Sumner	the Spur		5m bungalow													beaut lced rock garden	
176			near St Andrews Square	40 perches	8m bungalow		well planted												
177		city			10 m		lovely grounds												
178		St Albans		25 perches	5m sq hs														
179		Fendalton		29 perches	6m bungalow														
180		Merivale		32 perches	6m bungalow														
181		St Albans		34 perches	5m bungalow														
182		Woolston		24 perches	5m bungalow														
183		Addington		1/4a	7m sq hs														
184		Linwood		1/4a	7m l hs														
185		Merivale	1 Aikmans Rd	1/8a	6m res	hp													
186		Linwood	67 Osborne St	31.2 perches	5m res	h&c water	garden					lawn							
187		Merivale			7m semi-bung														
188		Cashmere	24 Valley Rd	1rood18.4perches	6m bungalow	h&c water	perfectly laid out	splendid orchard, smal fruits	ornamental trees							shrubs		rock steps; rock fence	
189		Merivale	cnr Merivale ln & Hewitts Rd and 78 Hewitts	1/4a	6 + 6ms	h&c water													
190			296 Hersford St	37.8perches	8m														
191		Avonside	70 Britlan St	3/8a	7m res		beautiful garden	well stocked with fruit trees											
192		19/01/1925	St Martins	3.5a	8m res		beautifully planted	fruit trees	ornamental trees										
193		Sumner			6m bungalow														
194		Sumner	adjoining esplanade		5m cottage														
195		Edgeware Rd			5m bungalow	h&c water													
196		St Martins		1/4a	5m			fruit										vegetables	
197		Merivale		1/4a	6m bungalow	hp													
198		Riccarton		1/4a	6m bungalow		well planted	fruits				flowers						vegetables	
199		Papanui		2.5a	6m res		very attractive garden	orchard											
200		Merivale	just off papanui Rd		6m		garden best kept in disctrict												
201		Linwood		30 perches	5m bungalow	h&c water													
202		20/01/1925	Riccarton		1.5a	8m	h&c water	choice grounds											
203		Cashmere Hills		1/4a	6m		garden												
204			53 St Albans St		4m hs														
205			cls to Papanui Rd		1/4a	6m bungalow		nicely laid out											
206		Redcliffs		1/2a	5m bungalow		nicely laid out												
207				1/4a	5m l house														
208		Linwood		1/4a	6m squ res	hp													
209		21/01/1925		3.5a	12m		overlooking avon	garden	splendid orchard	ornamental trees		terraced lawns				shrubs		vegetable garden	
210		St Albans	just over Bealey Ave	22 perches	5m bungalow		garden					lawn	flower garden						







## Appendix 3.viii

### *Press Property Advertisements, January 1935*

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## Appendix 3.ix

### *Press Property Advertisements, January 1945*

[illegible]

46	15/01/1945		Hills	1/4a	bungalow	view of ocean												
47		St Albans West	close to Rutland St		bungalow													
48	[16-1-1945]	North Linwood	just off Linwood Ave	30perches	6rm hs		laid out in garden		fruit trees			lawns					vegetable garden	
49		Linwood		1/4a	4rm hs													
50		Linwood		1/4a	5rm hs													
51		St Albans		small sec	5rm t house													
52	16/01/1945		10 mins bike frm square	3/16a	bungalow													
53			close in	small sec	bungalow													
54			Manchester St, cls to st mary's	1/4a	bungalow		nice section											
55		Spreydon		4a	6rm hs		excellent growing land											
56			Cranford St just over Edgware	small sec	4rm bungalow													
57		St Albans			7rm bungalow													
58					2 4rm flats													
59		Merivale	just off Papanui Rd	1/4a	older style													
60	17/01/1945		Innes Rd, 1 min Papanui rd		bungalow		amidst most picturesque & exclusive surroundings in chch		beautiful trees							shrubs		
61		Stewarts Gully		20perches	bungalow													
62			inside 2nd tram section	1/2a	6rm bungalow	gd hot water service												
63	18/01/1945	Upper Riccarton		1/2a	8rm bungalow													
64		Beckenham			4rm bungalow		high section											
65		St Albans	Colombo St		5rm bungalow													
66		Fendalton			bungalow		beatuifl grounds											
67		Fendalton			bungalow													
68	19/01/1945	Linwood			4rm bungalow													
69		New Brighton			4rm bungalow													
70		St Albans			5rm bungalow													
71		Papanui		1/4a	5rm bungalow		beautiful garden											
72		Papanui	cls to Papanui Rd & St Andrews	1.5a	bungalow		high terraced sect		trees		lawns				shrubs			
73		Merivale		83perches	hm		well laid out in garden				lawns, sheltered tenn				shrubs			
74		Fendalton		1/4a	6rm bungalow													
75		New Brighton			5rm bungalow													
76	20/01/1945	Avonside			5rm art bung		excellent section											
77		Linwood		50perches	5rm hs													
78		Riccarton		1/4a	4rm t house													
79		Linwood			4rm bungalow													
80		Redcliffs	on hill	1/4a	4rm bungalow		early garden											
81			close to Ferry Rd, Lancaster P	1/4a	5rm hs		lovely wide section											
82			close to Papanui Rd	1.5a	bungalow		well laid out in gardens		orchard									
83		city	sw		2 4rm cottages													
84			nr St Andrews college	1/4a	5rm bungalow		lovely sect, beautifully laid out											
85		Cashmere	foot of		5rm res													
86		St Albans	not far from Bealey Ave		6rm res		well planted and well established											
87		Linwood	155 Rolleston St		6rm res													
88		Linwood			4rm bungalow		garden		fruit trees		lawn							
89			by Papanui rd	1/2a	7rm hs		rich prod land		orchard of assorted trees	in full bearing	well kept l	flowers in	omamental	shrubs				
90		Fendalton-Riccarton	48 Puri St	1/2a	hs		beautiful garden		walnut, cherries	old trees								
91			handy to Papanui rd, St Andrews	1.5a	6rm res		garden			ornamental trees	lawn							
92		New Brighton		20perches	bungalow													
93			close to tram & racecourse	2a	large res													
94	[25-1-1945]	New Brighton	36 Hawke St		6rm hs		[The garden has twice won the "Victory Cup"]											
95		Fendalton			bungalow													
96			close to St Andrews		bungalow													
97	22/01/1945	Opawa		3/4a	hm													
98		Beckenham			5rm bungalow													
99		Richmond			bungalow													
100					4rm bungalow													



## Appendix 3.x

### Press Property Advertisements, January 1954

	Date	Location	Address	Acreage	water	garden/ land description	fruit	other trees	lawn/gr/ flowers	shrubs	vegetables	structures	rock gardens
1	2/01/1954		Papanui Rd										
2			close to St Andrews College			small section, perfect order							
3		Shirley	[4000 27/1/54]			nice section							
4			481 Barbadoes St										
5		St Albans	north										
6			by Bealey Ave	small sect									
7		Burwood		1a									
8													
9		Strowan											
10	3/01/1954	St Albans	st albans St, cls to Papanui Rd	small sect								glasshouse	
11		Merivale	handy Bealey Ave	small sect									
12		Sumner	Nayland St										
13		Spreydon	232 Barrington St			neat, well laid out garden							
14	5/01/1954	Linwood		1/2a									
15		City											
16		St Albans											
17		Avonside	26 Bracken St										
18		Riccarton-Fendallton		med sect		artistically laid out in gardens			lawns				
19		City											
20	6/01/1954	Wainoni											
21		Shirley	10 Woodchester ave, off medway st										
22		Clifton Hill			dual hot water								
23		Shirley	handy shirley school	1/4a									
24		Stn Brighton											
25		St Albans											
26	[12-1-1954]	Somerfield	Baretta St	1/2a		good garden					potatoes		
27		Riccarton				good section							
28		Merivale	139 Heaton St			beautiful garden						sm glasshouse	
29		Avonside		1/2a		all in garden	fruit				vegetables		
30		Merivale	2mins wlk hagley park										
31		Papanui		1/2a									
32	7/01/1954	Opawa											
33		Linwood											
34		Riccarton				well laid out garden							
35		Avonside cum Richmond			dual hot water								
36	8/01/1954	city	cls to squ										
37		Avonside											
38		Fendallton											
39		Upper Riccarton	main rd			well laid out section							
40		Cashmere Hills											
41		Cashmere											
42		Sumner	main rd	1/4a									
43		[1000 30/1]	26 Caledonian Rd, cls to Bealey	21.2perches		nice section							
44			Cranford St, cls to main north rd	1/4a		garden			lawns				
45		Lower Riccarton	Puriri St	75perches	dual hot water	gardens			lawns				

46			Gordon ave, cls Holly Rd	38perches	h.p.	garden			lawns				
47	9/01/1954	Merivale	Heaton St										
48		New Brighton	on sea front										
49													
50		Sumner	esplanade										
51		Scarborough		2a				part in natives trees					
52			near hagley park										
53		Belfast		32perches									
54		Merivale-Fendallton		36perches									
55		nw		1a		garden	orchard	ornamental trees			asparagus beds	glasshouse	
56		Sumner	Nayland St										
57			off Normans RD										
58		New Brighton	central										
59			Pages Rd										
60		Sth Brighton											
61		Wainoni	[cottage on 16/1/54]	3a									
62		Upper Riccarton	[1.5a on 19/1/54]	2.5a									
63		Shirley											
64		Sumner	cnr Colenso and Van Asch sts		h.p.	well laid out garden			lawns	flowers		shrubs	
65		Spreydon-Halswell	61 Hoon Hay Rd		river view	beautiful river garden outlook setting	fruit trees, vine	trees	lawns	flowers, roses		shrubs	
66		Riccarton		1/2a		garden		trees				shrubs	
67		Mt Pleasant	Summit Rd	1/4a									
68		Shirley		1/4a									
69			hillside	1/4a		planted							
70		Merivale											
71		Cashmere	nr Barrington st			section nicely set out garden			lawns			shrubs	
72		Spreydon			h.p.								
73		Wainoni				well laid out							
74		Riccarton-cum-Fendallton											
75				1a		well laid out in garden	orchards	sheltering trees				grapehouse, glasshouse	
76	12/01/1954	Upper Riccarton											
77		Spreydon	close in										
78		St Albans	Rutland St										
79		St Albans											
80		St Martins											
81		Waltham											
82			Hereford St, cls to Fitzgerald		dual hot water								
83		Sydenham											
84		Avonside											
85		Cashmere	nr foot of hills										
86		Shirley		1/4a									
87			Fitzgerald Ave	small sect									
88		Spreydon										fowlhouse	
89			Springfield Rd										
90			Bealey Ave, cls to Manchester St	1/4a		laid out in garden	fruit trees		lawns				
91		Avonside		3/8a	dual hot water	lovely garden							
92		Woodston		1/2a			fruit trees						
93		Merivale		small sect									
94		Papanui											
95	13/01/1954	North Beach											
96		Papanui	Northcole Rd	1/4a									
97		Mt Pleasant	nr foot of hills										
98		Sumner				healthy							
99		Fendallton		1/2a		lovely garden, well planted							
100		Spreydon			dual hot water								





151	15/01/1954		110 Bristol St	12 perches	hot water	garden													
152		Papanui	25 and 27 Frank St	1/4a	hot water														
153																			
154		Spreydon				lovely garden													
155		Stewarts Gully				good garden													
156		Fendallton																	
157		North Beach	Marine Pd	20 perches	artesian														
158		St Albans	21 Manuka St	34 perches	dual hot water														
159			Hoon Hay rd																
160		Riccarton																	
161			off Papanui Rd			stream front													
162		Fendallton	off Burnside Rd																
163		Papanui																	
164		Cashmere																	
165		Riccarton				dual hot water													
166		Sydenham				electric hot water													
167		Somerfield				hp	particularly fine garden												
168		Dallington					faultless garden												
169		Upper Riccarton																	
170		Merivale	Heaton St				beautiful garden												
171		Spreydon		1/4a							lawns	flower garden							
172		Spreydon		35 perches				fruit trees											
173		Papanui																	
174		Shirley					terraced and laid out												
175		Redcliffs				3 hi water													
176		St Albans																	
177			nw of city	48 perches															
178	16/01/1954		Papanui Rd	32 perches		lovely planted section													
179		Papanui																	
180		Richmond																	
181		city	east																
182		Radley		25 perches															
183			cls school, shops, bus			garden		fruit trees				roses [100P]		shrubs					
184		Merivale																	
185		Somerfield		1/2a															
186		Linwood																	
187		avonside																	
188			just off Papanui Rd, cls St Andrews																
189		New Brighton	Marine Pd																
190		Riccarton		75 perches															
191		Spreydon																well stocked kitchen garden	
192		Upper Riccarton		1/4a		garden				lawn									
193		Bryndwr																	
194		Sockburn																	
195		Riccarton																	
196		Spreydon				garden				lawns									
197		Shirley				garden				lawns				shrubs					
198		Fendallton	Riccarton Rd																
199		Merivale	near Carlton Mill Rd																
200			114 Colombo St	27 perches															
201		Papanui	just off Papanui Rd																
202		Spreydon	Lytellon St																
203		Spreydon																	
204		city	Worcester St																
205			west of Papanui Rd			artesian													
206		Waltham				h&c													
207		St Albans		1/4a															
208		Linwood																	
209			Sinclair St																
210		Sumner																	

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321		North Beach	Palmers Rd	30 perches															
322			Papanui Rd West																
323		Opawa								mature trees									
324	20/01/1954	St Albans																	
325		Riccarton																	
326			off Papanui Rd																
327		Sumner																	
328		Fendalton-Riccarton				sloping to street	beautiful garden												
329		St Albans	nr Papanui Rd																
330		Sumner																	
331		Cashmere Hills																	
332		Somerfield																	
333		city																	
334			Maven Rd, off Cashmere Rd	36 perches		dual hot water													
335			Ilam Rd	68 perches			magnificently laid out												
336			Knowles St								lawns	flower garden					vegetable garden		
337	21/01/1954	Mt Pleasant																	
338		city																	
339		North Beach	Bower Ave			hp	attractive garden				lawns								
340			cls to Fitzgerald Ave																
341		Addington		1/8a			charming garden												
342		Spreydon	off Lincoln Rd				good garden												
343		Riccarton					lovely section, well laid out												
344		Murray Aynsley	[5650 28/1/54]	1/2a															
345			Ferry Rd																
346		Riccarton					nicely laid-out garden												
347		Spreydon					well-kept garden												
348		Opawa		30 perches															
349		Somerfield	[2250 30/1/54]	1/4a															
350		St Albans																	
351		Spreydon																	
352		city	north																
353		Bryndwr					beautifully laid out grounds. Well-laid-out weedless garden												
354		avonside		32 perches		dual hot water	well laid out section												
355	22/01/1954	Brighton					garden				lawn								
356		Riccarton																	
357		Hoon Hay		2.5a															
358			Clyde Rd																
359		St Albans																	
360		Strowan																	
361		city																	
362		Spreydon		35 perches			nicely laid out				lawn	flowers					vegetable garden		
363		Linwood																	
364		Fendalton																	
365		Papanui		28 perches															
366			Burnside Rd	50 perches			attractively laid out garden												
367	23/01/1954	Addington																	
368		Spreydon		2.25a															
369		Cashmere Hills				dual hot water													
370		Linwood																	

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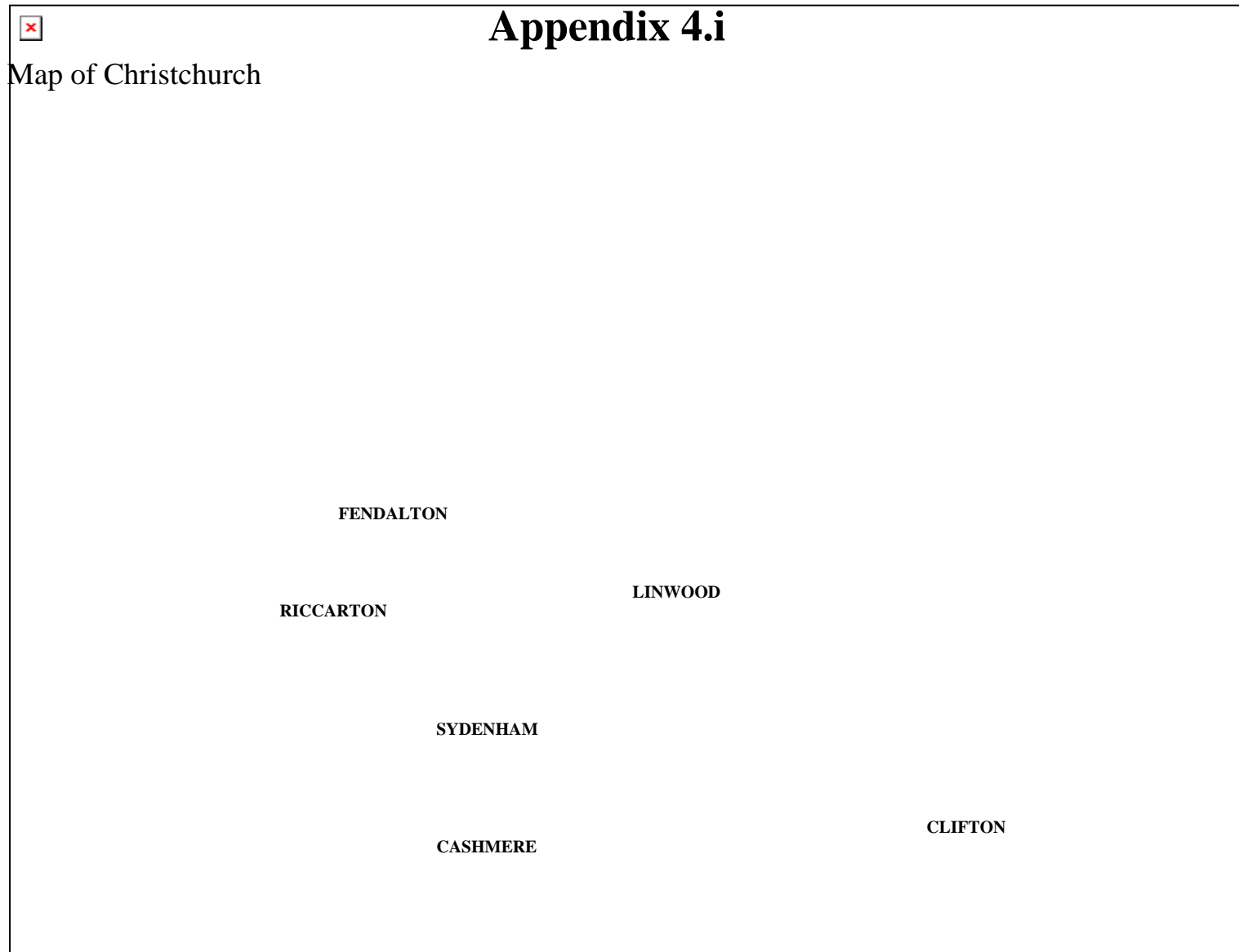
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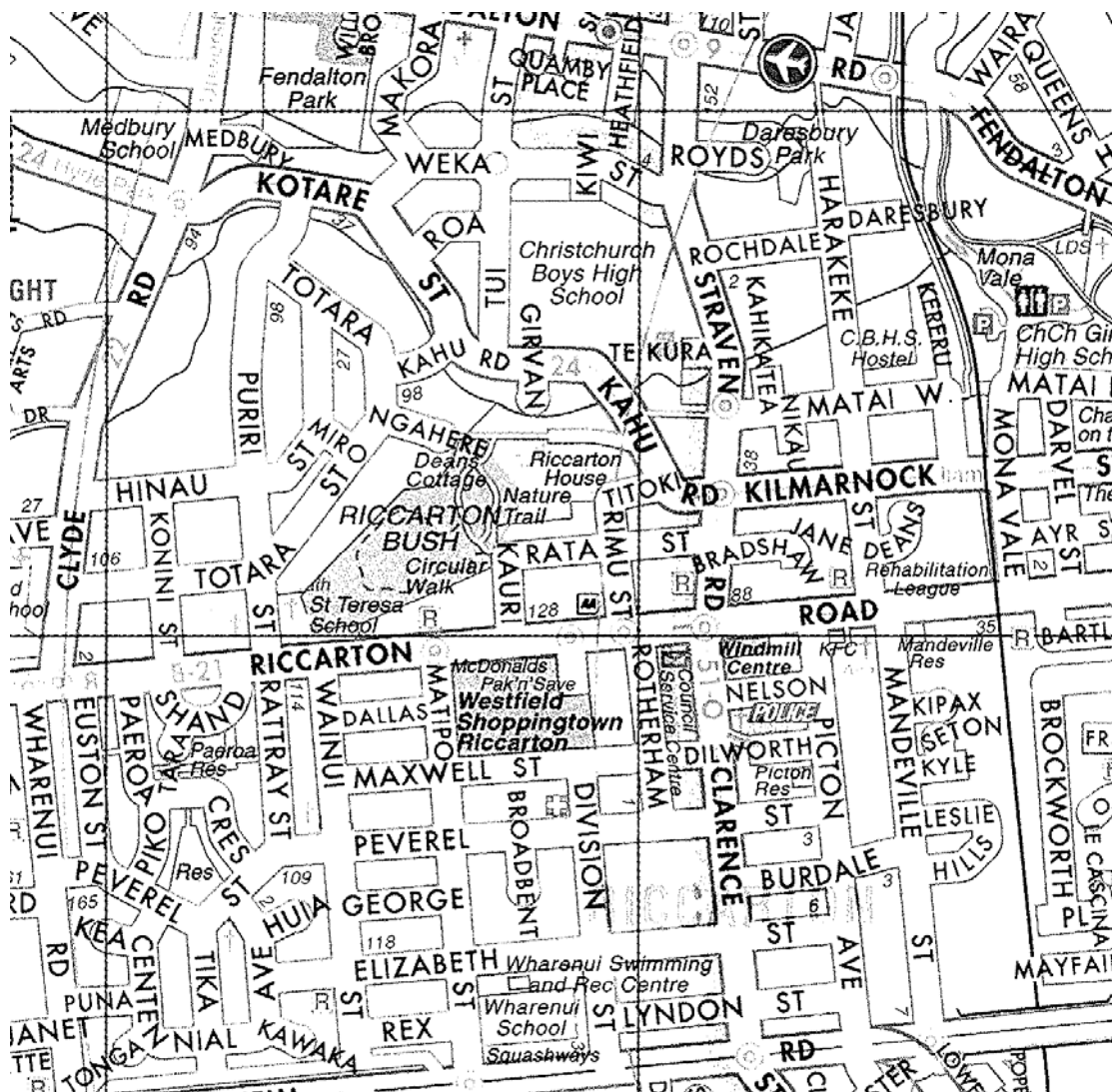
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601	Sumner	on Esplanade																	
602	New Brighton																		
603		155 Burwood Rd																	
604	Upper Riccarton																		
605	Somerfield																		
606	North Beach		1/4a																
607	St Andrews Hill																		
608	Papanui	Norfolk St	1/4a		good garden				lawns										
609	findallton																		
610	Hoon Hay		2.5a														2 glasshouses		
611	Spreydon				garden				lawn										
612	Linwood																		
613	St Albans																		
614	Shirley	east																	
615	Linwood		20 perches																
616	Woolston																		
617	Sydenham																		
618	Riccarton																		
619	Sydenham																		
620		cls St Andrews college			beautiful garden														
621	[30/1/54] Moncks Bay	238 Main Rd	1/4a		garden				lawns										
622	Wainoni																		
623	Wainoni																		
624	avonside		30 perches	dual hot water															
625	Cashmere	foot	44 4/10 perches	dual hot water															
626	Bryndwr	north	48 perches																
627	North Beach																		
628	South Brighton																		
629		Marine Pd																	
630	South Brighton				beautiful garden														
631	South Brighton																laid out in vegetables		
632	Brighton																		
633	North Beach																		
634	Sumner																	rock garden	
635	Shirley																		
636	Redcliffs	on Moncks Spur	1/4a																
637	findallton																		
638	city		43 perches																
639	Riccarton		68 perches																
640	St Albans																		
641		Olliviers Rd																	
642	St Albans																		
643	Cashmere				beautiful garden														
644	city																		
645	Burwood																		
646	findallton																		
647	city	427 Gloucester St			keen garden-owner, garden				lawns										
648	St Albans	78 Slater St	2roods19perches																
649		305 Eastern Tce	2roods21perches	garden		fruit trees of every description		lawns		bulbs of every description	shrubs	tomatoes	glasshouse						
650	papanui	25 Matsons	3roods27.3perches	beautiful garden		fruit trees	English and native trees	lawns		rose, flower gardens	shrubs	vegetable gardens, asparagus beds	grapehouse						
651		2 Lindores St	33.6perches	beautiful garden		fruit trees, strawberries		lawns		beautiful spacious flower gardens, roses	ornamental shrubs	vegetable gardens							
652	Shirley	72 Birchfield Ave	24 2/10perches	dual hot water						flower garden		vegetable gardens							
653	Halswell	61 Tankerville Rd	59 perches	dual hot water															
654		Clyde Rd			perfect garden														
655		236 Weston Rd	25 perches		garden				lawns										
656		231 Linwood Ave	32 perches																
657		7 Heyders Rd		dual hot water															
658		32 Kensington St		dual hot water															
659	Beckenham	159 Waima Tce																	
660	papanui	72 papanui Rd	71 perches		sunken garden, brick garden		lovely old trees				shrubs								



## Appendix 4.ii

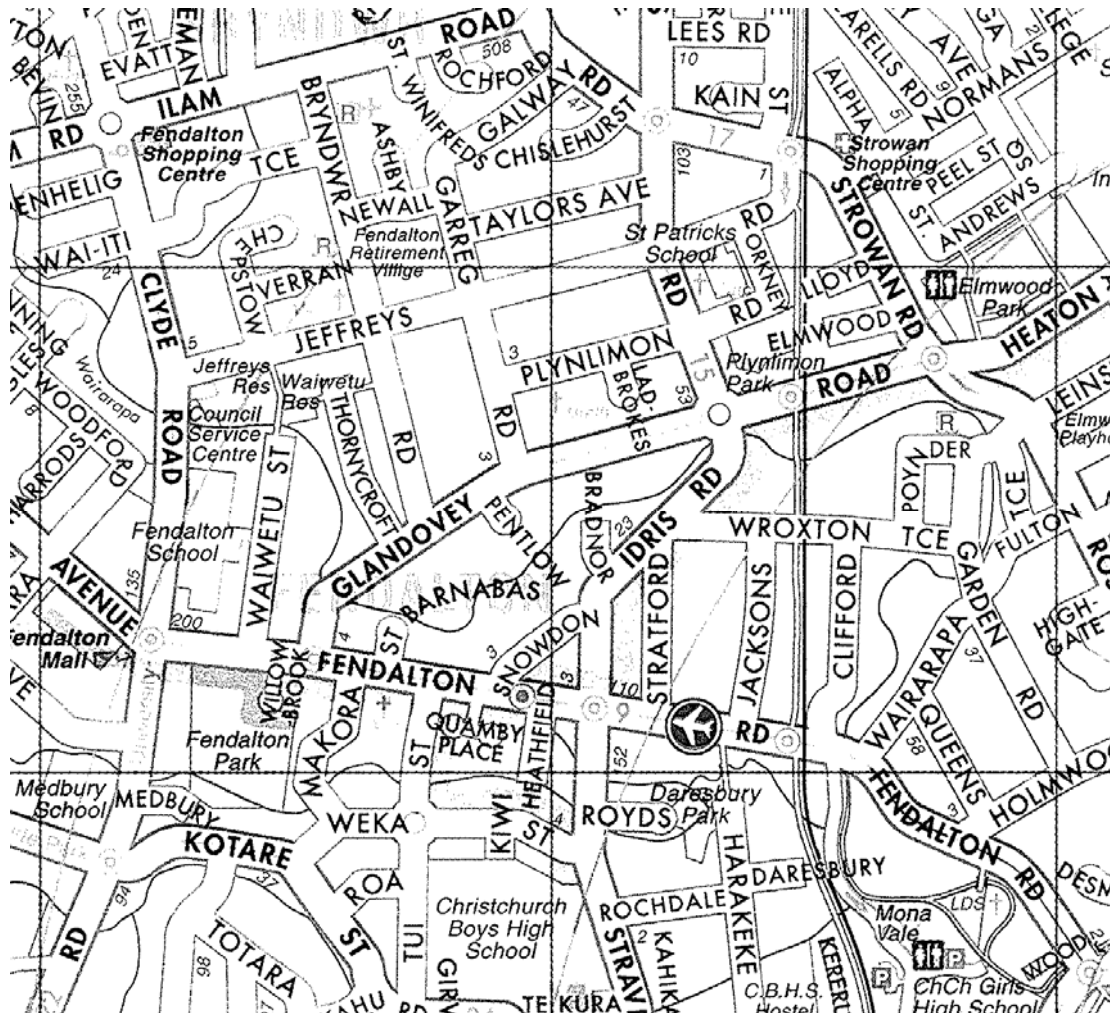
### Detail of 'Riccarton-cum-Fendalton' and Riccarton Borough



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## Appendix 4.iii

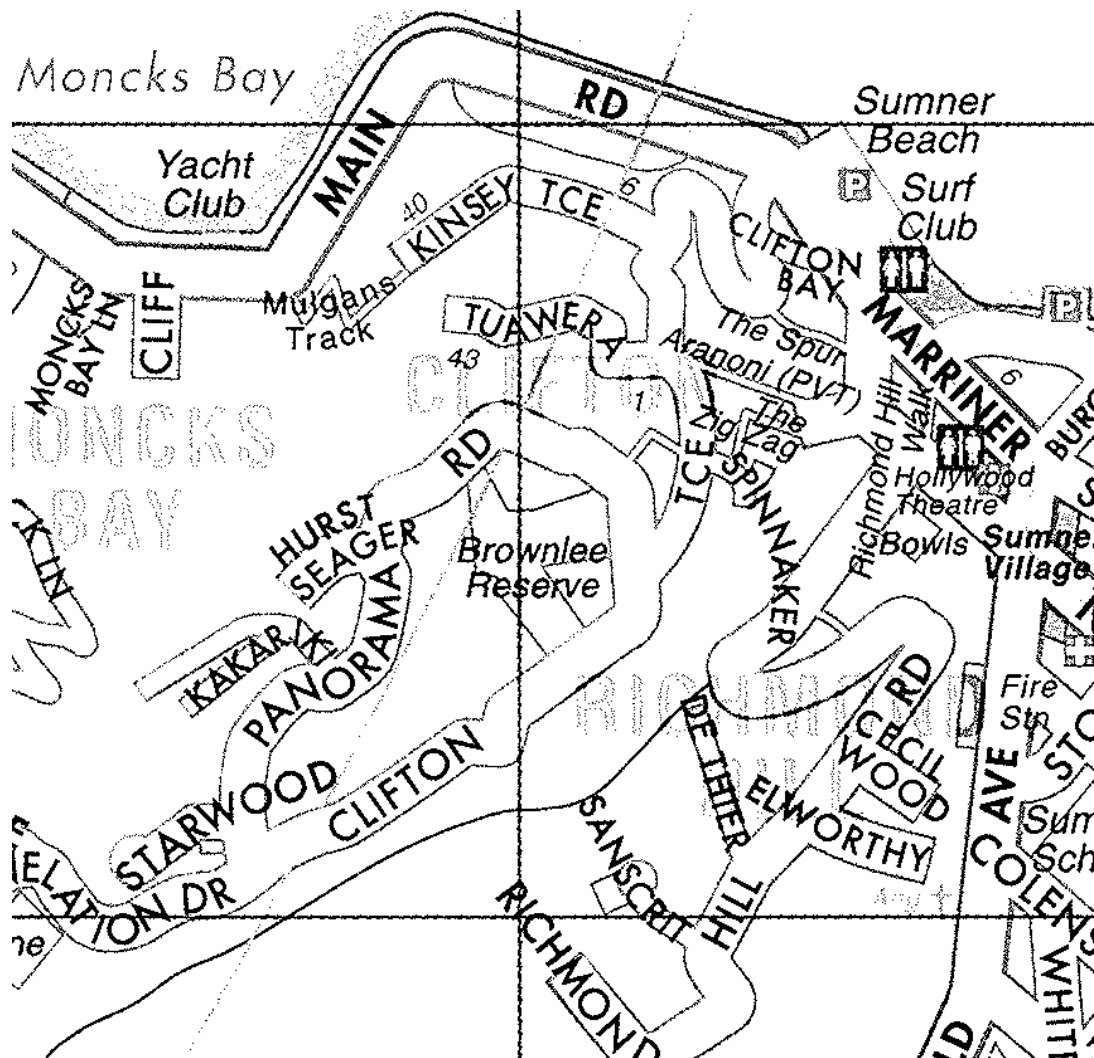
Detail of Fendalton, including part of 'Riccarton-cum-Fendalton'



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## Appendix 4.iv

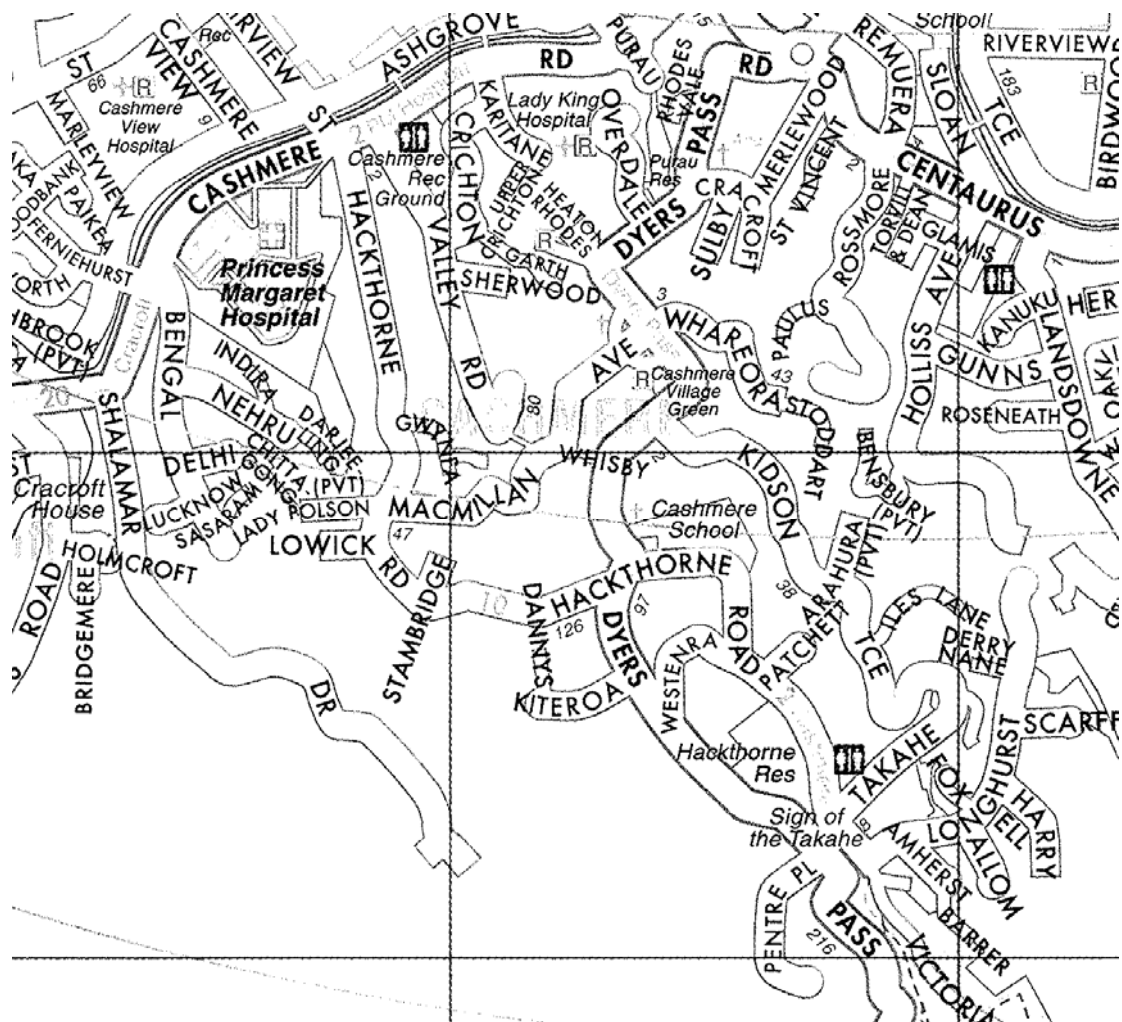
### Detail of Clifton



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## Appendix 4.v

### Detail of Cashmere



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